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GEORG EBERS

II

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS

THE HISTORICAL ROMANCES OF
GEORG EBERS

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS

Translated from the German by
Eleanor Grove

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
New York and London

An Egyptian Princess.

Photogravure from a painting by Sichel.

THE HISTORICAL ROMANCES OF
GEORG EBERS

AN
EGYPTIAN PRINCESS

VOLUME ONE

Translated from the German by
Eleanor Grove

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
New York and London

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Authorized Edition.

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TO

PROFESSOR RICHARD LEPSIUS

THE NINTH EDITION

OF THIS WORK

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

177911

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND GERMAN EDITION.

Aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae,
Aut simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitae.
Horat. *De arte poetica* v. 333.

It is now four years since this book first appeared before the public, and I feel it my duty not to let a second edition go forth into the world without a few words of accompaniment. It hardly seems necessary to assure my readers that I have endeavored to earn for the following pages the title of a "corrected edition." An author is the father of his book, and what father could see his child preparing to set out on a new and dangerous road, even if it were not for the first time, without endeavoring to supply him with every good that it lay in his power to bestow, and to free him from every fault or infirmity on which the world could look unfavorably? The assurance therefore that I have repeatedly bestowed the greatest possible care on the correction of my Egyptian Princess seems to me superfluous, but at the same time I think it advisable to mention briefly where and in what manner I have found it necessary to make these emendations. The notes have been revised, altered, and enriched with all those results of antiquarian research (more especially in reference to the language and monuments of ancient Egypt) which have come to our knowledge since the year 1864, and

which my limited space allowed me to lay before a general public. On the alteration of the text itself I entered with caution, almost with timidity; for during four years of constant effort as academical tutor, investigator and writer in those severe regions of study which exclude the free exercise of imagination, the poetical side of a man's nature may forfeit much to the critical; and thus, by attempting to remodel my tale entirely, I might have incurred the danger of removing it from the more genial sphere of literary work to which it properly belongs. I have therefore contented myself with a careful revision of the style, the omission of lengthy passages which might have diminished the interest of the story to general readers, the insertion of a few characteristic or explanatory additions, and the alteration of the proper names. These last I have written not in their Greek, but in their Latin forms, having been assured by more than one fair reader that the names Ibykus and Cyrus would have been greeted by them as old acquaintances, whereas the "Ibykos" and "Kyros" of the first edition looked so strange and learned, as to be quite discouraging. Where however the German *k* has the same worth as the Roman *c* I have adopted it in preference. With respect to the Egyptian names and those with which we have become acquainted through the cuneiform inscriptions, I have chosen the forms most adapted to our German modes of speech, and in the present edition have placed those few explanations which seemed to me indispensable to the right understanding of the text, at the foot of the page, instead of among the less easily accessible notes at the end.*

* In this edition all the notes have been placed at the foot of the pages containing the corresponding text. *Note to American edition.*

The fact that displeasure has been excited among men of letters by this attempt to clothe the hardly-earned results of severer studies in an imaginative form is even clearer to me now than when I first sent this book before the public. In some points I agree with this judgment, but that the act is kindly received, when a scholar does not scorn to render the results of his investigations accessible to the largest number of the educated class, in the form most generally interesting to them, is proved by the rapid sale of the first large edition of this work. I know at least of no better means than those I have chosen, by which to instruct and suggest thought to an extended circle of readers. Those who read learned books evince in so doing a taste for such studies; but it may easily chance that the following pages, though taken up only for amusement, may excite a desire for more information, and even gain a disciple for the study of ancient history.

Considering our scanty knowledge of the domestic life of the Greeks and Persians before the Persian war —of Egyptian manners we know more—even the most severe scholar could scarcely dispense with the assistance of his imagination, when attempting to describe private life among the civilized nations of the sixth century before Christ. He would however escape all danger of those anachronisms to which the author of such a work as I have undertaken must be hopelessly liable. With attention and industry, errors of an external character may be avoided, but if I had chosen to hold myself free from all consideration of the times in which I and my readers have come into the world, and the modes of thought at present existing among us, and had attempted to depict nothing but the purely ancient

characteristics of the men and their times, I should have become unintelligible to many of my readers, uninteresting to all, and have entirely failed in my original object. My characters will therefore look like Persians, Egyptians, &c., but in their language, even more than in their actions, the German narrator will be perceptible, not always superior to the sentimentality of his day, but a native of the world in the nineteenth century after the appearance of that heavenly Master, whose teaching left so deep an impression on human thought and feeling.

The Persians and Greeks, being by descent related to ourselves, present fewer difficulties in this respect than the Egyptians, whose dwelling-place on the fruitful islands won by the Nile from the Desert, completely isolated them from the rest of the world.

To Professor Lepsius, who suggested to me that a tale confined entirely to Egypt and the Egyptians might become wearisome, I owe many thanks; and following his hint, have so arranged the materials supplied by Herodotus as to introduce my reader first into a Greek circle. Here he will feel in a measure at home, and indeed will entirely sympathize with them on one important point, viz.: in their ideas on the Beautiful and on Art. Through this Hellenic portico he reaches Egypt, from thence passes on to Persia and returns finally to the Nile. It has been my desire that the three nations should attract him equally, and I have therefore not centred the entire interest of the plot in one hero, but have endeavored to exhibit each nation in its individual character, by means of a fitting representative. The Egyptian Princess has given her name to the book, only because the weal and woe of all my other char-

acters were decided by her fate, and she must therefore be regarded as the central point of the whole.

In describing Amasis I have followed the excellent description of Herodotus, which has been confirmed by a picture discovered on an ancient monument. Herodotus has been my guide too in the leading features of Cambyses' character; indeed as he was born only forty or fifty years after the events related, his history forms the basis of my romance.

"Father of history" though he be, I have not followed him blindly, but, especially in the development of my characters, have chosen those paths which the principles of psychology have enabled me to lay down for myself, and have never omitted consulting those hieroglyphic and cuneiform inscriptions which have been already deciphered. In most cases these confirm the statements of Herodotus.

I have caused Bartja's murder to take place after the conquest of Egypt, because I cannot agree with the usually received translation of the Behistûn inscription. This reads as follows: "One named Cambujiya, son of Curu, of our family, was king here formerly and had a brother named Bartiya, of the same father and the same mother as Cambujiya. *Thereupon* Cambujiya killed that Bartiya." In a book intended for general readers, it would not be well to enter into a discussion as to niceties of language, but even the uninitiated will see that the word "thereupon" has no sense in this connection. In every other point the inscription agrees with Herodotus' narrative, and I believe it possible to bring it into agreement with that of Darius on this last as well; but reserve my proofs for another time and place.

It has not been ascertained from whence Herodotus

has taken the name Smerdis which he gives to Bartja and Gaumata. The latter occurs again, though in a mutilated form, in Justin.

My reasons for making Phanes an Athenian will be found in Note 90. Vol. 1. This coercion of an authenticated fact might have been avoided in the first edition, but could not now be altered without important changes in the entire text. The means I have adopted in my endeavor to make Nitetis as young as possible need a more serious apology; as, notwithstanding Herodotus' account of the mildness of Amasis' rule, it is improbable that King Hophra should have been alive twenty years after his fall. Even this however is not impossible, for it can be proved that his descendants were not persecuted by Amasis.

On a Stela in the Leyden Museum I have discovered that a certain Psamtik, a member of the fallen dynasty, lived till the 17th year of Amasis' reign, and died at the age of seventy-five.

Lastly let me be permitted to say a word or two in reference to Rhodopis. That she must have been a remarkable woman is evident from the passage in Herodotus quoted in Notes 10, and 14, Vol. 1., and from the accounts given by many other writers. Her name, "the rosy-cheeked one," tells us that she was beautiful, and her amiability and charm of manner are expressly praised by Herodotus. How richly she was endowed with gifts and graces may be gathered too from the manner in which tradition and fairy lore have endeavored to render her name immortal. By many she is said to have built the most beautiful of the Pyramids,—the Pyramid of Mycerinus or Menkera. One tale related of her and reported by Strabo and Ælian prob-

ably gave rise to our oldest and most beautiful fairy-tale, Cinderella; another is near akin to the Loreley legend. An eagle, according to Ælian—the wind, in Strabo's tale,—bore away Rhodopis' slippers while she was bathing in the Nile, and laid them at the feet of the king, when seated on his throne of justice in the open market. The little slippers so enchanted him that he did not rest until he had discovered their owner and made her his queen.

The second legend tells us how a wonderfully beautiful naked woman could be seen sitting on the summit of one of the pyramids (*ut in una ex pyramidibus*); and how she drove the wanderers in the desert mad through her exceeding loveliness.

Moore borrowed this legend and introduces it in the following verse:

> "Fair Rhodope, as story tells—
> The bright unearthly nymph, who dwells
> 'Mid sunless gold and jewels hid,
> The lady of the Pyramid."

Fabulous as these stories sound, they still prove that Rhodopis must have been no ordinary woman. Some scholars would place her on a level with the beautiful and heroic Queen Nitokris, spoken of by Julius Africanus, Eusebius and others, and whose name, (signifying the victorious Neith) has been found on the monuments, applied to a queen of the sixth dynasty. This is a bold conjecture; it adds however to the importance of our heroine; and without doubt many traditions referring to the one have been transferred to the other, and vice versâ. Herodotus lived so short a time after Rhodopis, and tells so many exact particulars of her private life that it is impossible she should

have been a mere creation of fiction. The letter of Darius, given at the end of Vol. II., is intended to identify the Greek Rhodopis with the mythical builder of the Pyramid. I would also mention here that she is called Doricha by Sappho. This may have been her name before she received the title of the "rosy-cheeked one."

I must apologize for the torrent of verse that appears in the love-scenes between Sappho and Bartja; it is also incumbent upon me to say a few words about the love-scenes themselves, which I have altered very slightly in the new edition, though they have been more severely criticised than any other portion of the work.

First I will confess that the lines describing the happy love of a handsome young couple to whom I had myself become warmly attached, flowed from my pen involuntarily, even against my will (I intended to write a novel in prose) in the quiet night, by the eternal Nile, among the palms and roses. The first love-scene has a story of its own to me. I wrote it in half an hour, almost unconsciously. It may be read in my book that the Persians always reflected in the morning, when sober, upon the resolutions formed the night before, while drunk. When I examined in the sunshine what had come into existence by lamplight, I grew doubtful of its merits, and was on the point of destroying the love-scenes altogether, when my dear friend Julius Hammer, the author of "Schau in Dich, und Schau um Dich," too early summoned to the other world by death, stayed my hand. Their form was also approved by others, and I tell myself that the *poetical* expression of love is very similar in all lands and ages, while lovers' conversations and modes of intercourse vary according

to time and place. Besides, I have to deal with one of those by no means rare cases, where poetry can approach nearer the truth than prudent, watchful prose. Many of my honored critics have censured these scenes; others, among whom are some whose opinion I specially value, have lavished the kindest praise upon them. Among these gentlemen I will mention A. Stahr, C. V. Holtei, M. Hartmann, E. Hoefer, W. Wolfsohn, C. Leemans, Professor Veth of Amsterdam, etc. Yet I will not conceal the fact that some, whose opinion has great weight, have asked: "Did the ancients know anything of love, in our sense of the word? Is not romantic love, as we know it, a result of Christianity?" The following sentence, which stands at the head of the preface to my first edition, will prove that I had not ignored this question when I began my task.

"It has often been remarked that in Cicero's letters and those of Pliny the younger there are unmistakeable indications of sympathy with the more sentimental feeling of modern days. I find in them tones of deep tenderness only, such as have arisen and will arise from sad and aching hearts *in every land and every age.*"

A. v. HUMBOLDT. Cosmos II. p. 19.

This opinion of our great scholar is one with which I cheerfully coincide and would refer my readers to the fact that love-stories were written before the Christian era: the Amor and Psyche of Apuleius for instance. Indeed love in all its forms was familiar to the ancients. Where can we find a more beautiful expression of ardent passion than glows in Sappho's songs? or of patient faithful constancy than in Homer's Penelope? Could there be a more beautiful picture of the union of two

loving hearts, even beyond the grave, than Xenophon has preserved for us in his account of Panthea and Abradatas? or the story of Sabinus the Gaul and his wife, told in the history of Vespasian? Is there anywhere a sweeter legend than that of the Halcyons, the ice-birds, who love one another so tenderly that when the male becomes enfeebled by age, his mate carries him on her outspread wings whithersoever he will; and the gods, desiring to reward such faithful love, cause the sun to shine more kindly, and still the winds and waves on the "Halcyon days" during which these birds are building their nest and brooding over their young? There can surely have been no lack of romantic love in days when a used-up man of the world, like Antony, could desire in his will that wherever he died his body might be laid by the side of his beloved Cleopatra: nor of the chivalry of love when Berenice's beautiful hair was placed as a constellation in the heavens. Neither can we believe that devotion in the cause of love could be wanting when a whole nation was ready to wage a fierce and obstinate war for the sake of one beautiful woman. The Greeks had an insult to revenge, but the Trojans fought for the possession of Helen. Even the old men of Ilium were ready "to suffer long for such a woman."* And finally is not the whole question answered in Theocritus' unparalleled poem, "the Sorceress?" We see the poor love-lorn girl and her old woman-servant, Thestylis, cowering over the fire above which the bird supposed to possess the power of bringing back the faithless Delphis is sitting in his wheel. Simœtha has learnt many spells and charms from an

* τοιῇδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολύν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν.

Assyrian, and she tries them all. The distant roar of the waves, the smoke rising from the fire, the dogs howling in the street, the tortured fluttering bird, the old woman, the broken-hearted girl and her awful spells, all join in forming a night scene the effect of which is heightened by the calm cold moonshine. The old woman leaves the girl, who at once ceases to weave her spells, allows her pent-up tears to have their way, and looking up to Selene the moon, the lovers' silent confidante, pours out her whole story: how when she first saw the beautiful Delphis her heart had glowed with love, she had seen nothing more of the train of youths who followed him, "and," (thus sadly the poet makes her speak)

> "how I gained my home
> I knew not; some strange fever wasted me.
> Ten days and nights I lay upon my bed.
> O tell me, mistress Moon, whence came my love!" *

"Then" (she continues) when Delphis at last crossed her threshold:

> "I
> "Became all cold like snow, and from my brow
> Brake the damp dewdrops: utterance I had none,
> Not e'en such utterance as a babe may make
> That babbles to its mother in its dreams;
> But all my fair frame stiffened into wax,—
> O tell me mistress Moon, whence came my love!" *

Whence came her love? thence, whence it comes to us now. The love of the creature to its Creator, of man to God, is the grand and yet gracious gift of Christianity. Christ's command to love our neighbor called into existence not only the conception of philanthropy, but of humanity itself, an idea unknown to the

* Translation by C. S. Calverley.

heathen world, where love had been at widest limited to their native town and country. The love of man and wife has without doubt been purified and transfigured by Christianity; still it is possible that a Greek may have loved as tenderly and longingly as a Christian. The more ardent glow of passion at least cannot be denied to the ancients. And did not their love find vent in the same expressions as our own? Who does not know the charming roundelay:

"Drink the glad wine with me,
With me spend youth's gay hours;
Or a sighing lover be,
Or crown thy brow with flowers.
When I am merry and mad,
Merry and mad be you;
When I am sober and sad,
Be sad and sober too!" *

—written however by no poet of modern days, but by Praxilla, in the fifth century before Christ. Who would guess either that Moore's little song was modelled on one written even earlier than the date of our story?

"As o'er her loom the Lesbian maid
In love-sick languor hung her head.
Unknowing where her fingers stray'd,
She weeping turned away and said,—
'Oh, my sweet mother, 'tis in vain,
I cannot weave as once I wove;
So wilder'd is my heart and brain
With thinking of that youth I love.'"

If my space allowed I could add much more on this subject, but will permit myself only one remark in conclusion. Lovers delighted in nature then as now; the moon was their chosen confidante, and I know of no modern poem in which the mysterious charm of a summer

* Translated by Dean Milman.

night and the magic beauty which lies on flowers, trees and fountains in those silent hours when the world is asleep, is more exquisitely described than in the following verses, also by Sappho, at the reading of which we seem forced to breathe more slowly, "kühl bis an's Herz hinan."

"Planets, that around the beauteous moon
Attendant wait, cast into shade
Their ineffectual lustres, soon
As she, in full-orb'd majesty array'd,
Her silver radiance pours
Upon this world of ours." *

and:—

"Thro' orchard plots with fragrance crown'd,
The clear cold fountain murm'ring flows;
And forest leaves, with rustling sound,
Invite to soft repose." *

The foregoing remarks seemed to me due to those who consider a love such as that of Sappho and Bartja to have been impossible among the ancients. Unquestionably it was much rarer then than in these days: indeed I confess to having sketched my pair of lovers in somewhat bright colors. But may I not be allowed, at least once, to claim the poet's freedom?

How seldom I have availed myself of this freedom will be evident from the notes included in each volume. They seemed to me necessary, partly in order to explain the names and illustrate the circumstances mentioned in the text, and partly to vindicate the writer in the eyes of the learned. I trust they may not prove discouraging to any, as the text will be found easily readable without reference to the explanations.

Jena, November 28, 1868.

GEORG EBERS, Dr.

* Translated by J. H. Merivale.

PREFACE

TO THE FOURTH GERMAN EDITION.

Two years and a half after the appearance of the third edition of "An Egyptian Princess," a fourth was needed. I returned long since from the journey to the Nile, for which I was preparing while correcting the proof-sheets of the third edition, and on which I can look back with special satisfaction. During my residence in Egypt, in 1872–73, a lucky accident enabled me to make many new discoveries; among them one treasure of incomparable value, the great hieratic manuscript, which bears my name. Its publication has just been completed, and it is now in the library of the Leipzig University.

The Papyrus Ebers, the second in size and the best preserved of all the ancient Egyptian manuscripts which have come into our possession, was written in the 16th century B. C., and contains on 110 pages the hermetic book upon the medicines of the ancient Egyptians, known also to the Alexandrine Greeks. The god Thoth (Hermes) is called "the guide" of physicians, and the various writings and treatises of which the work is composed are revelations from him. In this venerable scroll diagnoses are made and remedies suggested for the internal and external diseases of most portions of the human body. With the drugs prescribed are numbers, according to which they are weighed with weights and

measured with hollow measures, and accompanying the prescriptions are noted the pious axioms to be repeated by the physician, while compounding and giving them to the patient. On the second line of the first page of our manuscript, it is stated that *it came from Sais*. A large portion of this work is devoted to the visual organs. On the twentieth line of the fifty-fifth page begins the *book on the eyes*, which fills eight large pages. We were formerly compelled to draw from Greek and Roman authors what we knew about the remedies used for diseases of the eye among the ancient Egyptians. The portion of the Papyrus Ebers just mentioned is now the only *Egyptian* source from whence we can obtain instruction concerning this important branch of ancient medicine.

All this scarcely seems to have a place in the preface of a historical romance, and yet it is worthy of mention here; for there is something almost "providential" in the fact that it was reserved for the author of "An Egyptian Princess" to bestow the gift of this manuscript upon the scientific world. Among the characters in the novel the reader will meet an oculist from Sais, who wrote a book upon the diseases of the visual organs. The fate of this valuable work exactly agrees with the course of the narrative. The *papyrus scroll of the Sais oculist*, which a short time ago existed only in the imagination of the author and readers of "An Egyptian Princess," is now an established fact. When I succeeded in bringing the manuscript home, I felt like the man who had dreamed of a treasure, and when he went out to ride found it in his path.

A reply to Monsieur Jules Soury's criticism of "An Egyptian Princess" in the Revue des deux Mondes, Vol.

VII., January 1875, might appropriately be introduced into this preface, but would scarcely be possible without entering more deeply into the ever-disputed question, which will be answered elsewhere, whether the historical romance is ever justifiable. Yet I cannot refrain from informing Monsieur Soury here that "An Egyptian Princess" detained me from no other work. I wrote it in my sick-room, before entering upon my academic career, and while composing it, found not only comfort and pleasure, but an opportunity to give dead scientific material a living interest for myself and others.

Monsieur Soury says romance is the mortal enemy of history; but this sentence may have no more justice than the one with which I think myself justified in replying: Landscape painting is the mortal enemy of botany. The historical romance must be enjoyed like any other work of art. No one reads it to study history; but many, the author hopes, may be aroused by his work to make investigations of their own, for which the notes point out the way. Already several persons of excellent mental powers have been attracted to earnest Egyptological researches by "An Egyptian Princess." In the presence of such experiences, although Monsieur Soury's clever statements appear to contain much that is true, I need not apply his remark that "historical romances injure the cause of science" to the present volume.

Leipzig, April 19, 1875.

GEORG EBERS.

PREFACE

TO THE FIFTH GERMAN EDITION.

AGAIN a new edition of "An Egyptian Princess" has been required, and again I write a special preface, because the printing has progressed so rapidly as unfortunately to render it impossible for me to correct some errors to which my attention was directed by the kindness of the well-known botanist, Professor Paul Ascherson of Berlin, who has travelled through Egypt and the Oases.

In Vol. I, page 7, I allow *mimosas* to grow among other plants in Rhodopis' garden. I have found them in all the descriptions of the Nile valley, and afterwards often enjoyed the delicious perfume of the golden yellow flowers in the gardens of Alexandria and Cairo. I now learn that this very mimosa (Acacia farnesiana) originates in tropical America, and was undoubtedly unknown in ancient Egypt. The *bananas*, which I mentioned in Vol. I, p. 64, among other Egyptian plants, were first introduced into the Nile valley from India by the Arabs. The botanical errors occurring in the last volume I was able to correct. Hehn's admirable work on "Cultivated Plants and Domestic Animals" had taught me to notice such things. Theophrastus, a native of Asia Minor, gives the first description of a citron, and this proves that he probably saw the so-called paradise-apple, but not our citron, which

I am therefore not permitted to mention among the plants cultivated in ancient Lydia. Palms and birches are both found in Asia Minor; but I permitted them to grow side by side, thereby committing an offense against the geographical possibility of vegetable existence. The birch, in this locality, flourishes in the mountainous region, the palm, according to Griesbach (*Vegetation of the Earth*, Vol. I, p. 319) only appears on the southern coast of the peninsula. The latter errors, as I previously mentioned, will be corrected in the new edition.

I shall of course owe special thanks to any one who may call my attention to similar mistakes.

Leipzig, March 5, 1877.

GEORG EBERS.

PREFACE

TO THE NINTH GERMAN EDITION.

I HAVE nothing to add to the ninth edition of "An Egyptian Princess" except that it has been thoroughly revised. My sincere thanks are due to Dr. August Steitz of Frankfort on the Main, who has travelled through Egypt and Asia Minor, for a series of admirable notes, which he kindly placed at my disposal. He will find that they have not remained unused.

Leipzig, November 13, 1879.

GEORG EBERS.

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE Nile had overflowed its bed. The luxuriant corn-fields and blooming gardens on its shores were lost beneath a boundless waste of waters; and only the gigantic temples and palaces of its cities, (protected from the force of the water by dikes), and the tops of the tall palm-trees and acacias could be seen above its surface. The branches of the sycamores and plane-trees drooped and floated on the waves, but the boughs of the tall silver poplars strained upward, as if anxious to avoid the watery world beneath. The full-moon had risen; her soft light fell on the Libyan range of mountains vanishing on the western horizon, and in the north the shimmer of the Mediterranean could faintly be discerned. Blue and white lotus-flowers floated on the clear water, bats of all kinds darted softly through the still air, heavy with the scent of acacia-blossom and jasmine; the wild pigeons and other birds were at roost in the tops of the trees, while the pelicans, storks and cranes squatted in groups on the shore under the shelter of the papyrus-reeds and Nile-beans. The pelicans and storks remained motionless, their long bills hidden beneath their wings, but the cranes were startled by the mere beat of an oar, stretching their necks, and peering anxiously into the distance, if they heard but the song of the

boatmen. The air was perfectly motionless, and the unbroken reflection of the moon, lying like a silver shield on the surface of the water, proved that, wildly as the Nile leaps over the cataracts, and rushes past the gigantic temples of Upper Egypt, yet on approaching the sea by different arms, he can abandon his impetuous course, and flow along in sober tranquillity.

On this moonlight night in the year 528 B. C. a bark was crossing the almost currentless Canopic mouth of the Nile. On the raised deck at the stern of this boat an Egyptian was sitting to guide the long pole-rudder,[1] and the half-naked boatmen within were singing as they rowed. In the open cabin, which was something like a wooden summer-house, sat two men, reclining on low cushions. They were evidently not Egyptians; their Greek descent could be perceived even by the moonlight. The elder was an unusually tall and powerful man of more than sixty; thick grey curls, showing very little attempt at arrangement, hung down

1. Wilkinson, Manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians III. 196. and III. pl. XIV. A good representation of the different vessels employed by the ancient Egyptians is to be found in Dümichen's *Flotte einer ägyptischen Königin*, T. I—V. T. XXV—XXXI. Here too we have the ships of Solomon returning from Ophir, and bringing (with the exception of the peacocks) all the treasures with which he became enriched by the help of his friend Hiram's shipmen; of which we read in I Kings IX. 28, X. 2. The monuments of Egypt even supply information on the progress of nautical art. The movable rudder did not come into use until late. Shipbuilders' yards are to be found as early as the time of the Pyramids. For instance they are seen in the Mastaba of Sakkara, erected by the great nobles of the empire in the fourth dynasty for tombs and mortuary chapels. The Mastaba were built in the form of obtuse pyramids, the exterior was left unadorned, but the interior all the more richly decorated with the delicate, yet clear and characteristically treated bas-reliefs, which rouse the admiration of our modern sculptors. There are representations of ships in the Mastaba of Tî. Dümichen, *Resultate der auf Befehl Sr. Majestät des Königs Wilhelm I. unternommenen Reise I.* T. II. and IV. As an appendix to this work, the author gives an admirable treatise by Graser, the best authority upon ancient maritime affairs.

over his short, firm throat; he wore a simple, homely cloak, and kept his eyes gloomily fixed on the water. His companion, on the contrary, a man perhaps twenty years younger, of a slender and delicate build, was seldom still. Sometimes he gazed into the heavens, sometimes made a remark to the steersman, disposed his beautiful purple chlanis* in fresh folds, or busied himself in the arrangement of his scented brown curls, or his carefully curled beard.

The boat had left Naukratis,[2] at that time the only

2. This town, which will form the scene of a part of our tale, lies in the northwest of the Nile Delta, in the Saitic Nomos or district, on the left bank of the Canopic mouth of the river. According to Strabo and Eusebius it was founded by Milesians, and Bunsen reckons 749 B. C. It seems that in the earliest times Greek ships were only allowed to enter this mouth of the Nile in case of necessity. The entire intercourse of the Egyptians with the hated strangers was, at that time, restricted to the little island of Pharos lying opposite to the town of Thonis. Hom. *Odyss.* IV. 36. Herod. II. 113 *and* 14. E. Curtius, in his clever pamphlet on the Ionians, tries to prove that communication between the Egyptians and Ionians existed at a far earlier period. There is no doubt that there was a communication with foreigners at that time, but we hardly think directly through that celebrated race. It was rather the Phœnicians who planted colonies on the north coast of Lower Egypt at a very early period, adopted the Egyptian customs, were called Egyptian Phœnicians, and remaining true to the policy of their kindred in Tyre and Carthage, endeavored by force or cunning to exclude all foreigners from the ports and commercial towns established by themselves. Those details are to be found in our work: *Aegypten und die Bücher Moses, p.* 195. Mover's *Phönizier*, II. 2. *p.* 39 and following. As soon as the Greeks had settled in Naukratis, they fortified it and built temples to their gods: the men of Ægina to Zeus, the Milesians to Apollo, the Samians to Hera. A large temple was erected also, common to many tribes and towns, and a kind of trade-union (Hanseatic body) founded, called the Hellenion. It was near to this flourishing commercial town that Alexander fixed on a spot for the site of Alexandria. Brugsch has recently given fresh grounds for the confirmation of this opinion. *Histoire d'Egypte. Deuxieme édition*, p. 128, Cap. XI. *Le Semitisme en Egypte.*

* The chlanis was a light summer-mantle, worn especially by the more elegant Athenians, and generally made of expensive materials. The simpler cloak, the himation, was worn by the Doric Greeks, and principally by the Spartans.

Hellenic port in Egypt, about half an hour before. During their journey, the grey-haired, moody man had not spoken one word, and the other had left him to his meditations. But now, as the boat neared the shore, the restless traveller, rising from his couch, called to his companion: "We are just at our destination, Aristomachus! That pleasant house to the left yonder, in the garden of palms which you can see rising above the waters,[3] is the dwelling of my friend Rhodopis. It was built by her husband Charaxus, and all her friends, not excepting the king himself, vie with one another in adding new beauties to it year by year. A useless effort! Let them adorn that house with all the treasures in the world, the woman who lives within will still remain its best ornament!"

The old man sat up, threw a passing glance at the building, smoothed the thick grey beard which clothed his cheeks and chin, but left the lips free,[4] and asked abruptly: "Why so much enthusiasm, Phanes, for this Rhodopis? How long have the Athenians been wont to extol old women?" At this remark the other smiled,

3. We are writing of the month of October, when the Nile begins to sink. The inundations can now be accurately accounted for, especially since the important and laborious synoptical work of H. Barth (*Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, 1863. *Vol.* XIV. and S. Baker's Travels in Abyssinia). They are occasioned by the tropical rains, and the melting of the snows on the high mountain-ranges at the Equator. In the beginning of June a gradual rising of the Nile waters can be perceived; between the 15th and 20th June, this changes to a rapid increase; in the beginning of October the waters reach their highest elevation, a point, which, even after having begun their retreat, they once more attempt to attain; then, at first gradually, and afterwards with ever increasing rapidity, they continue to sink. In January, February and March, the Nile is still drying up; and in May is at its lowest point, when the volume of its waters is only one-twentieth of that in October.

4. The Spartans were not in the habit of wearing a beard on the upper lip.

and answered in a self-satisfied tone, "My knowledge of the world, and particularly of women, is, I flatter myself, an extended one, and yet I repeat, that in all Egypt I know of no nobler creature than this grey-haired woman. When you have seen her and her lovely grandchild, and heard your favorite melodies sung by her well-practised choir of slave-girls,[5] I think you will thank me for having brought you hither."—"Yet," answered the Spartan gravely, "I should not have accompanied you, if I had not hoped to meet Phryxus, the Delphian, here."

"You will find him here; and besides, I cannot but hope that the songs will cheer you, and dispel your gloomy thoughts." Aristomachus shook his head in denial, and answered: "To you, sanguine Athenians, the melodies of your country may be cheering: but not so to me; as in many a sleepless night of dreams, my longings will be doubled, not stilled by the songs of Alkman.[6]

5. The Greeks often entertained their guests during the banquet with music; and in the Egyptian pictures women singing, or playing on the double-flute, blind harpers, &c. are generally to be seen at the feasts.

6. Alkman (Attic, Alkmæon) flourished in Sparta about 650 B. C. His mother was a Lydian slave in Sardes, and he came into the possession of Agesides, who gave him his freedom. His beautiful songs soon procured him the rights of a Lacedæmonian citizen. He was appointed to the head-directorship in the entire department of music in Lacedæmon and succeeded in naturalizing the soft Lydian music, brought in by Polymnestes, there. Himerius, *orat.* 5. His language was the Doric-Laconian. After a life devoted to song, the pleasures of the table and of love, he is said to have died of a fearful disease. From the frequent chorusses of virgins (Parthenien) said to have been originally introduced by him, his frequent songs in praise of women, and the friendly relations in which he stood to the Spartan women (more especially to the fair Megalostrata), he gained the name of the woman's poet. His Pæans and hymns are also celebrated. The fragments of his poems have been collected by Welcker and are to be found in Bergk's *Poetæ Lyrici Græci. Alcm. fr.* German in Hartung's, *Die Griechischen Lyriker, Greek with a metrical translation.*

"Do you think then," replied Phanes, "that I have no longing for my beloved Athens, for the scenes of our youthful games, for the busy life of the market? Truly, the bread of exile is not less distasteful to my palate than to yours, but, in the society afforded by this house, it loses some of its bitterness, and when the dear melodies of Hellas, so perfectly sung, fall on my ear, my native land rises before me as in a vision, I see its pine and olive groves, its cold, emerald green rivers, its blue sea, the shimmer of its towns, its snowy mountain-tops and marble temples, and a half-sweet, half-bitter tear steals down my cheek as the music ceases, and I awake to remember that I am in Egypt, in this monotonous, hot, eccentric country, which, the gods be praised, I am soon about to quit. But, Aristomachus, would you then avoid the few Oases in the desert, because you must afterwards return to its sands and drought? Would you fly from one happy hour, because days of sadness await you later? But stop, here we are! Show a cheerful countenance, my friend, for it becomes us not to enter the temple of the Charites* with sad hearts."

As Phanes uttered these words, they landed at the garden wall, washed by the Nile. The Athenian bounded lightly from the boat, the Spartan following with a heavier, firmer tread. Aristomachus had a wooden leg, but his step was so firm, even when compared with that of the light-footed Phanes, that it might have been thought to be his own limb.

The garden of Rhodopis was as full of sound, and

His songs must have become known in Egypt, though at a later period, since a fragment of Alkmæon's songs is one of the most valuable papyrus MSS. found in modern times on the Nile.

* The goddesses of grace and beauty, better known by their Roman name of "Graces."

scent and blossom as a night in fairy-land. It was one labyrinth of acanthus shrubs, yellow mimosa, the snowy gelder-rose, jasmine and lilac, red roses and laburnums, overshadowed by tall palm-trees, acacias and balsam-trees. Large bats hovered softly on their delicate wings over the whole, and sounds of mirth and song echoed from the river.

This garden had been laid out by an Egyptian, and the builders of the Pyramids had already been celebrated for ages for their skill in horticulture.[7] They well understood how to mark out neat flower-beds, plant groups of trees and shrubs in regular order, water the whole by aqueducts and fountains, arrange arbors and summer-houses, and even inclose the walks with artistically clipped hedges, and breed goldfish in stone basins.

At the garden gate Phanes stopped, looked around him carefully and listened; then shaking his head, "I do not understand what this can mean," he said. "I hear no voices, there is not a single light to be seen, the boats are all gone, and yet the flag is still flying at its gay flag-staff, there, by the obelisks on each side of the gate.[8] Rhodopis must surely be from home; can they have forgotten?"——Here a deep voice suddenly

7. Wilkinson II. 136—145. Rosellini *monumenti civili*, Pl. 68 & 69. The best representations of the ancient Egyptians' gardens have been found in the sepulchres of Tel el Amarna (18th Dynasty) Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Ægypten und Æthiopien*. Abth. III. p. 102. They also exist in some tombs at Abd el Qurnah in Thebes, for instance in graves 34 and 35 and the vault of General Amen em heb, a great lover of flowers.

8. Obelisks bearing the name of the owner were sometimes to be seen near the gates of the Egyptian country-houses. Flags too were not uncommon, but these were almost exclusively to be found at the gates of the temples, where to this day the iron sockets for the flagstaff can still be seen. Neither were flags unknown to the Greeks. It appears from some inscriptions on the staffs of the Pylons, that if the former were not actually erected for lightning-rods, it had been noticed that they attracted the electricity.

interrupted him with the exclamation, "Ha! the commander of the body-guard!"

"A pleasant evening to you, Knakais," exclaimed Phanes, kindly greeting the old man, who now came up.

"But how is it that this garden is as still as an Egyptian tomb, and yet the flag of welcome is fluttering at the gate? How long has that white ensign waved for guests in vain?"

"How long indeed?" echoed the old slave of Rhodopis with a smile. "So long as the Fates graciously spare the life of my mistress, the old flag is sure to waft as many guests hither as the house is able to contain. Rhodopis is not at home now, but she must return shortly. The evening being so fine, she determined on taking a pleasure-trip on the Nile with her guests. They started at sunset, two hours ago, and the evening meal is already prepared;[9] they cannot remain away much longer. I pray you, Phanes, to have patience and follow me into the house. Rhodopis would not easily forgive me, if I allowed such valued guests to depart. You stranger," he added, turning to the Spartan, "I entreat most heartily to remain; as friend of your friend you will be doubly welcome to my mistress."

The two Greeks, following the servant, seated themselves in an arbor, and Aristomachus, after gazing on the scene around him now brilliantly lighted by the moon, said, "Explain to me, Phanes, by what good fortune this Rhodopis, formerly only a slave and courtesan[10] can now live as a queen, and receive her guests in this princely manner?"

9. The principal meal, especially at Athens (the Deipnon δεῖπνον) was taken late in the day.

10. The mistresses (Hetære) of the Greeks must not be compared with modern women of bad reputation. The better members of this

"I have long expected this question," answered the Athenian. "I shall be delighted to make you acquainted with the past history of this woman before you enter her house. So long as we were on the Nile, I would not intrude my tale upon you; that ancient river has a wonderful power of compelling to silence and quiet contemplation. Even my usually quick tongue was paralyzed like yours, when I took my first night-journey on the Nile."

"I thank you for this," replied the Spartan. "When I first saw the aged priest Epimenides,[11] at Knossus in Crete, he was one hundred and fifty years old, and I remember that his age and sanctity filled me with a strange dread; but how far older, how far more sacred, is this hoary river, the ancient stream 'Aigyptos'![12] Who would wish to avoid the power of his spells? Now, however, I beg you to give me the history of Rhodopis."

class represented the intelligence and culture of their sex in Greece, and more especially in the Ionian provinces. As an instance we need only recall Aspasia and her well-attested relation to Pericles and Socrates. Our heroine Rhodopis was a celebrated woman. The Hetæra, Thargalia of Miletus, became the wife of a Thessalian king. Ptolemy Lagi married Thaïs; her daughter was called Irene, and her sons Leontiskus and Lagus. (Athen· XIII. p. 576). Finally, statues were erected to many. This subject is treated in the best manner in F. Jakob's miscellaneous writings IV., and Becker's Charicles II. p. 51—69. More will be said on it in our text.

11. Epimenides a priest of Zeus at Knossus in Cretc. According to Pliny he dicd at the age of 299; according to Xenophanes of Kolophon, his contemporary, at 154 years. Laërtius Diogcnes relates that he could die and restore himself to life at pleasure. As he was in Sparta in 576 the aged Aristomachus could well have seen him.

12. The Nile was called "Aigyptos" by the Greeks in ancient times, see Homer's *Odyssey* IV. 478. The inundations of Lower Egypt by the river is called on some monuments "Akab;" but probably only from the country it watered at its mouth, for the coast of the Delta, which in earlier times was peopled by the Egyptian Phœnicians seems to have been named "Aikab-t" or "Aigab-t," the curved coast, and the word Egypt was undoubtedly first heard by the Greeks from the lips of the Phœnicians.

Phanes began: "When Rhodopis was a little child playing with her companions on the Thracian sea-shore, she was stolen by some Phœnician mariners, carried to Samos, and bought by Iadmon, one of the geomori, or landed aristocracy of the island. The little girl grew day by day more beautiful, graceful and clever, and was soon an object of love and admiration to all who knew her. Æsop,[13] the fable-writer, who was at that time also in bondage to Iadmon, took an especial pleasure in the growing amiability and talent of the child, taught her and cared for her in the same way as the tutors whom we keep to educate our Athenian boys.

The kind teacher found his pupil tractable and quick of comprehension, and the little slave soon practised the arts of music, singing and eloquence, in a more charming and agreeable manner than the sons of her master Iadmon, on whose education the greatest care had been lavished. By the time she had reached her fourteenth year, Rhodopis was so beautiful and accomplished, that the jealous wife of Iadmon would not suffer

13. Æsop (620-550) was, according to Herodotus, a Thracian, according to others a Phrygian, or a native of Mesembria, a Milesian colony on the Black Sea. He was sold as a slave to Iadmon the Samian, served in the same house with Rhodopis and at the same time, and afterwards received his freedom. Herod. II. 134. Having attained celebrity by his fables, he is said to have taken up the calling of an advocate, and to have enjoyed the friendship of Crœsus. In his old age he was sent by the latter on a commission to Delphi; there the offended priests accused him of having stolen a golden vessel, he was unjustly condemned to death, and thrown over the Delphian rocks. In after times every tale taken from the natural life of men or animals and practically illustrating some moral was called after Æsop's fables. On himself and his fables see Grauert *de Æsopo et fabulis Æsopiis. Bonn.* 1825. It has lately been maintained, more especially by Zündel, *Revue Archéol.* III *p.* 354, and on good grounds, that the origin of the Æsopian fables is to be found in Egypt. The universal belief assigns India as the birthplace of fables about animals. In the Villa Albani at Rome is the famous mutilated statue of Æsop. A concentrated ideal type of the clever hump-back.

her to remain any longer in the house, and the Samian was forced, with a heavy heart, to sell her to a certain Xanthus. The government of Samos at that time was still in the hands of the less opulent nobles; had Polykrates then been at the head of affairs, Xanthus need not have despaired of a purchaser. These tyrants fill their treasuries as the magpies their nests! As it was, however, he went off with his precious jewel to Naukratis, and there gained a fortune by means of her wondrous charms. These were three years of the deepest humiliation to Rhodopis, which she still remembers with horror.

Now it happened, just at the time when her fame was spreading through all Greece, and strangers were coming from far to Naukratis for her sake alone,[14] that the people of Lesbos rose up against their nobles, drove them forth, and chose the wise Pittakus as their ruler. The highest families of Lesbos were forced to leave the country, and fled, some to Sicily, some to the Greek provinces of Italy, and others to Egypt. Alcæus,[15] the

14. According to Herodotus the beauty of Rhodopis was so great that every Greek knew her by name.

15. Alcæus, a friend and contemporary of Sappho, and descended like her from one of the highest noble families of Lesbos, may take rank among the best lyric poets of antiquity. Endowed with all the advantages, and not less with all the pride and prejudices of his class, he devoted himself, body and soul, in prose and in song, to the overthrow of the tyrants, the expulsion of the Athenian settlers from Sigæum and the retention of the supremacy in the hands of the nobles, who were making a powerful resistance to the tyrants Melanchrus, Megalagyrus, Myrsilus, and the Kleanaktidæ. He was unsuccessful in his two last enterprises, and when Pittakus attained to the leadership of the people, was forced, with his brothers and the rest of his party, to fly from Lesbos. The former entered the army of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Assyria; the latter, and with them Alcæus, wandered forth into the world at large. There is no doubt that he and Charaxus, the brother of Sappho, were together for some time in Naukratis. When Pittakus had completed the code of laws to which he owes the name of a philosoper, he recalled the exiles and forgave Alcæus, notwithstanding the bitter verses which the latter had written upon him

greatest poet of his day, and Charaxus, the brother of that Sappho[16] whose odes it was our Solon's last wish to learn by heart, came here to Naukratis, which had already long been the flourishing centre of commercial

even during his banishment. His songs breathe "the spirit of the Mytilenian nobles, bred and educated as aristocrats, proud in the consciousness of their own high position, and secure of the most unrivalled prerogatives, dividing their time between action and enjoyment, and keeping up a light heart even in the deepest misfortune." His was a burning genius which burst into song whenever a fresh joy gladdened, or a sorrow crushed his spirit; he could not but sing, and therefore his songs took the most perfect forms. In his transparency and wonderful ease, his freedom from aspiration and enjoyment of the present moment, he must be regarded as one of the most remarkable forerunners of Horace, who adopted not only his metres, but many of his ideas. His relation to Sappho, mentioned in the text, can be proved from occasional fragments of his writings. They are to be found in *A. Matthiae Alcaei reliquiæ. L.* 1827. Also Welcker, *Kleine Schriften* I. pp. 126—147. and Bergk, *Lyr. gr. ed.* 1. *pp.* 569—598. Hartung. *Die Griechischen Lyriker. Griechisch mit metrischer Uebersetzung.* V. *p.* 18. His likeness as a statue has been found near Monte Calvo and answers entirely to the above mentioned description of his character. There is also a very fine statue in the Villa Borghese at Rome, which probably represents our poet. Braun, *Ruinen und Museen Roms. p* 548. Braun believes it to be the work of Pindar.

16. The celebrated poetess Sappho, according to Athenæus, lived in the time of Alyattes, king of Lydia, therefore between 620—563 B. C.; according to the Chronicle of Eusebius in the 44th Olympiad, or about 600 B. C. She is also mentioned as a contemporary of Pittakus, Alcæus and Rhodopis, which coincides with the above statement. We can scarcely be in error if we fix the time of her birth at Mytilene in Lesbos, about the year 620 B. C. Her father's name was Skamandronymus or Skamon. For this we have not only the authority of Herodotus, Ælian, and other ancient writers, but also of Welcker, Bernhardy, Richter and others. Her mother and her daughter both bore the name of Klëis. Beside the brother spoken of in our tale (Charaxus), she had another, named Larichus, who is said by Athenæus to have held a high preferment in the Prytanæum at Mitylene. From this, and from the fact that Sappho and Charaxus were both exiled at the time of Pittakus, it is evident that they belonged to a family of very high degree. They must also have been wealthy, or Charaxus could not, as Herodotus relates, have bought Rhodopis. Suidas calls Cerkolas, the husband of Sappho, expressly, a very rich man. Among her admirers, her celebrated contemporary Alcæus must not be overlooked, while Bernhardy's well-known story of her unfortunate passion for the young Phaon must be regarded as a fable. The story that Anacreon dedicated certain love-verses to Sappho is equally untrue, as he flourished some 30 or 40 years later, and the verses were intended for another Lesbian woman. Her impure pas-

communication between Egypt and the rest of the world. Charaxus saw Rhodopis, and soon loved her so passionately, that he gave an immense sum to secure her from the mercenary Xanthus, who was on the point

sion for beautiful young girls and her leap from the Leukadian rocks are also totally fabulous. See Welcker, F. W. Richter, Bernhardy and Köchly. Of Sappho's appearance we know but little. Plato, Plutarch and others call her "the beautiful Sappho," Alcæus praises her black hair and her charming smile. Welcker reckons her among the celebrated beauties of antiquity. She was frequently represented on the coins, in the pictures and statues of her native land, but it seems that between these representations there were great differences. One of her pictures is thus described by Democharis:

> Nature herself the magic portrait drew,
> And, painter, gave thy Lesbian Muse to view.
> Light sparkles in her eyes; and fancy seems
> The radiant fountain of those living beams;
> Through the smooth fullness of the unclouded skin
> Looks out the clear ingenuous soul within.
> Joy melts to fondness in her glistening face
> And Love and Music breathe a mingled grace,*

Thousands of songs were dedicated to her; we will only mention here the two following epigrams by Pinytus, and Antipater of Sidon, taken from *F. Jacob's Griechischen Blumenlese:*

> "This tomb has Sappho's bones and idle name
> But her wise words have won immortal fame."

> "Sappho my name. When Homer's song divine
> Man hath surpassed, may maiden rival mine."

Sappho wrote in the Æolic manner. ΣΑΦΟ is only to be found on a vase in Vienna, and Welcker believes is an error in the writing alone. See the fragments of her poems, Bergk, *Lyr. Grec.* Ed. II. There is a first rate lecture on Sappho to be found in Koechly's *Academical lectures and discourses, p.* 153 and following. Solon's wish, alluded to in the text, was expressed to his nephew. Stobæus *Serm.* XXIX. 28. A bas-relief in the British Museum is worthy of mention here. It was found at Melos and represents Sappho, with Alcæus grasping at her lute. In explanation of this carving, Overbeck in his *Geschichte der Plastik,* Vol. I. p. 148 has quoted the following anecdote by Aristotle: "Alcæus loved his beautiful and gifted countrywoman, and is said to have once accosted her with the tender words: "Thou dark-haired, smiling Sappho, fain would I tell thee something, but fear restrains me." Upon which the poetess coyly and somewhat snappishly retorted: "If thou wert impelled by any good and noble impulse, and didst not desire to utter evil with thy tongue, shame would not bid thee lower thine eyes; thou wouldst frankly say what is right."

* Translated by Rev. Dr. Hodgson.

of returning with her to his own country; Sappho wrote some biting verses, derisive of her brother and his purchase, but Alcæus on the other hand, approved, and gave expression to this feeling in glowing songs on the charms of Rhodopis. And now Sappho's brother, who had till then remained undistinguished among the many strangers at Naukratis, became a noted man through Rhodopis. His house was soon the centre of attraction to all foreigners, by whom she was overwhelmed with gifts. The King Hophra,[17] hearing of her beauty and talent, sent for her to Memphis, and offered to buy her of Charaxus, but the latter had already long, though secretly, given Rhodopis her freedom, and loved her far too well to allow of a separation. She too, loved the handsome Lesbian and refused to leave him despite the brilliant offers made to her on all sides. At length Charaxus made this wonderful woman his lawful wife, and continued to live with her and her little daughter Klëis in Naukratis, until the Lesbian exiles were recalled to their native land by Pittakus. He then started homeward with his wife, but fell ill on the journey, and died soon after his arrival at Mitylene. Sappho, who had derided her brother for marrying one beneath him,

17. For this king we have chosen his Biblical name, Hophra. Among the Greeks he was called Uaphris and Apries. The hieroglyphical signs for his name (see Lepsius, *Königsbuch*, *T.* 48) produce Uah-ph-ra-het, from whence come the paraphrases Uaphris and Hophra (Uah-ph-ra). He reigned from 588—569. The correctness of these figures can be certified, first, by the existing agreement in the dates, but more still by Mariette's discovery of the Apis tombs, the inscriptions on which throw an especially strong light on the reigns of the 26th dynasty of kings, to which Hophra belonged. He was dethroned by Amasis, (who, according to Athenæus, was his friend), during an insurrection mentioned by the prophets of the old Covenant, Jeremiah XLIV. 30. XLVI. 24-26, and described more in detail by Herodotus. Herod. II. 169. The Assyrian monuments, whose cuneiform inscriptions are more easily deciphered, now strongly corroborate this portion of Egyptian history.

soon became an enthusiastic admirer of the beautiful widow and rivalled Alcæus in passionate songs to her praise.

After the death of the poetess, Rhodopis returned, with her little daughter, to Naukratis, where she was welcomed as a goddess. During this interval Amasis,[18] the present king of Egypt, had usurped the throne of the Pharaohs, and was maintaining himself in its possession by help of the army, to which caste he belonged. As his predecessor Hophra had accelerated his fall, and brought the army and priesthood to open rebellion by his predilection for the Greek nation, and for intercourse with foreigners generally, (always an abomination in the eyes of the Egyptians), men felt confident that Amasis would return to the old ways, would rigorously exclude foreigners from the country,[19] dismiss the Greek mercenaries, and instead of taking counsel from the Greeks, would hearken only to the commands of the priesthood. But in this, as you must see yourself, the prudent Egyptians had guessed wide of the mark in their choice of a

18. Amasis, of whom much will be said in our text, reigned 570-526 B. C. His name, in the hieroglyphic signs, was Aahmes or young moon (Lepsius, *Königsbuch* Pl. 48. 8.) but the name by which he was commonly called was Sa-Nit "Son of Neith." His name, and pictures of him are to be found on stones in the fortress of Cairo, on a relief in Florence, a statue in the Vatican, on sarcophagi in Stockholm and London, a statue in the Villa Albani and on a little temple of red granite at Leyden. A beautiful bust of gray-wacke in our possession probably represents the same king.

19. In their relations with foreigners, the Egyptians may be compared with the Japanese of our own times. Every man not an Egyptian was hateful to them, and yet, from the earliest times they had been compelled to admit foreigners into their land. Indeed they could not prevent the Phœnicians, who, like the Spaniards and Portuguese in Japan in the 16th century had the whole foreign trade of the country in their hands, from gaining considerable influence, not only in all classes of Egyptian life, but even over the religious consciousness of the people. As in Japan the Iberians were succeeded by the Dutch, so did the Greeks follow the Phœnicians in Egypt, and after the Persian invasion and Alexander's expeditions they ruled in the valley of the Nile.

ruler; they fell from Scylla into Charybdis. If Hophra was called the Greeks' friend, Amasis must be named our lover. The Egyptians, especially the priests and the army, breathe fire and flame, and would fain strangle us one and all, off-hand, This feeling on the part of the soldiery does not disturb Amasis, for he knows too well the comparative value of their and our services; but with the priests it is another and more serious matter, for two reasons: first, they possess an unbounded influence over the people; and secondly. Amasis himself retains more affection than he likes to acknowledge to us, for this absurd and insipid religion[20]—a religion which appears doubly sacred to its adherents simply because it has existed in this eccentric land[21]—unchanged for thousands of years. These priests make the king's life burdensome to him; they persecute and injure us in every possible way; and indeed, if it had not been for the king's protection, I should long ago have been a dead man. But I am wandering from my tale! As I said before, Rhodopis was received at Naukratis with open arms by all, and loaded with marks of favor by Amasis, who formed her acquaintance. Her daughter Klëis,—as is the case with the little Sappho now—was never allowed to appear in the society which assembled every evening at her mother's house, and indeed was even more strictly brought up than the other young girls in Naukratis. She married Glaucus, a rich

20. We know that the wisdom of the Egyptian priesthood was highly esteemed by the Greeks; but many passages in the classic writers prove that the religion itself was looked upon by the Greeks and Romans, who only saw the eccentric forms in which it was clothed, as absurd and insipid. Afterwards the followers of the new Platonic doctrines drew largely from the teachings of the priests in Heliopolis, Thebes, etc.

21. Herod. II. 35.

Phocæan merchant of noble family, who had defended his native town with great bravery against the Persians, and with him departed to the newly-founded Massalia,[22] on the Celtic coast. There, however, the young couple both fell victims to the climate, and died, leaving a little daughter, Sappho. Rhodopis at once undertook the long journey westward, brought the orphan child back to live with her, spent the utmost care on her education, and now that she is grown up, forbids her the society of men, still feeling the stains of her own youth so keenly that she would fain keep her granddaughter (and this in Sappho's case is not difficult), at a greater distance from contact with our sex than is rendered necessary, by the customs of Egypt. To my friend herself society is as indispensable as water to the fish or air to the bird. Her house is frequented by all the strangers here, and whoever has once experienced her hospitality and has the time at command will never after be found absent when the flag announces an evening of reception. Every Greek of mark is to be found here, as it is in this house that we consult on the wisest measures for encountering the hatred of the priests and bringing the king round to our own views. Here you can obtain not only the latest news from home, but from the rest of the world, and this house is an inviolable

22. Massalia, the present Marseilles, was founded by a colony from Phocæa, an Ionian town on the coast of Asia Minor which, 19 years before the beginning of our tale, had fallen into the hands of the Persians, the entire body of its citizens having fled to their ships. It is probable that before the inhabitants of Asia Minor settled there, a Phœnician factory had stood on the site of Massalia. At all events we find the Phœnicians later as joint possessors of the place, proof of which is borne not only by classical authority, but by the inscriptions and monuments discovered there. The word Celt was applied by the ancient Greeks not only to the Gauls, but also to the German and Iberian races.

sanctuary for the persecuted, Rhodopis possessing a royal warrant which secures her from every molestation on the part of the police.[23] Our own songs and our own language are to be heard here, and here we take counsel on the best means for delivering Greece from the ever fresh encroachments of her tyrants.[24]

In a word, this house is the centre of attraction for all Hellenic interests in Egypt, and of more importance to us politically, than our temple, the Hellenion itself, and our hall of commerce.*

In a few minutes you will see this remarkable grandmother, and, if we should be here alone, perhaps the grandchild too; you will then at once perceive that they owe everything to their own rare qualities and not to the chances of good fortune. Ah! there they come! they are going towards the house. Cannot you hear the slave-girls singing? Now they are going in. First let them quietly be seated, then follow me, and when the evening is over you shall say whether you repent of having come hither, and whether Rhodopis resembles more nearly a queen or a freed bond-woman."

The house[25] was built in the Grecian style. It was

23. A very active and strict police-force existed in Egypt, the organization of which is said to have owed much to Amasis' care. We also read in inscriptions and papyrus rolls, that a body of mounted police existed, the ranks of which were generally filled by foreigners in preference to natives.

24. Shortly before the date of our narrative, several ambitious Greeks, had succeeded in overthrowing the oligarchy and obtaining the supreme power, amongst others Pisistratus of Athens (died 527), Polykrates of Samos (died 522), and Lygdamis of Naxos (died 524).

25. On the internal arrangement of the rooms in this house, I have followed Becker and K. F. Hermann. The description in Barthelemy's Anacharsis taken from the not perfectly clear passage in Vitruvius, is much too diffuse for our purpose. Hirt's design pleases us less than most, while, on the other hand, in the sketch drawn by Hermann, (*Charikles* II. 99.), acute criticism and good taste seem to

* See Note 2.

a rather long, one-storied building, the outside of which would be called extremely plain in the present day; within, it united the Egyptian brilliancy of coloring with the Greek beauty of form. The principal door opened into the entrance-hall.* To the left of this lay a large dining-room, overlooking the Nile, and, opposite to this last was the kitchen, an apartment only to be found in the houses of the wealthier Greeks, the poorer families being accustomed to prepare their food at the hearth in the front apartment. The hall of reception lay at the other end of the entrance-hall, and was in the form of a square, surrounded within by a colonnade, into which various chambers** opened. This was the apartment devoted to the men,*** in the centre of which was the household fire, burning on an altar-shaped hearth of rich Æginetan metal-work.[26]

have been alike employed in the application of the passages referred to. A rich man, as was Charaxus, could easily have built such a house as the one we have described, though the private dwellings of the Greeks at the time referred to were probably of a more simple character. Our knowledge of the arrangement of Greek houses is far less accurate than of Roman ones, which can be perfectly reconstructed from the buildings in Pompeii. Overbeck describes them with great precision and clearness. *Pompeii*, 3d edition, 1866. Vol. I. p. 230. *Sketch*, p. 212.

26. Ægina was very early celebrated for skill in the plastic arts. The transition from a typical form to the free imitation of nature can be more clearly perceived in the early Æginetan work than elsewhere. The groups from the pediment of the temple of Athene in Ægina, discovered in 1811 by a party of English, Danish and German travellers and now in Munich, may be considered as the most interesting memorials of old Hellenic art. They afford sufficient proof that the Greeks learnt the mechanical part of the plastic art, the treatment of the materials, and even the relative proportions of the human body from the Egyptians, though even as scholars they excelled their masters. The above-mentioned figures represent combats between the Greeks and Trojans for the bodies of fallen Greeks, in one for the body of Achilles, in another for Oïkles. The group from the west pediment, with the statue of Athene in the centre is particularly well-preserved and worthy of notice. S. Wagner, *Bericht über die äginetischen Bildwerke mit Anmerkungen von Schelling*. 1817. Gerhard, *Vorlesungen*

* Thyroreion. ** Oikemata. *** Andronitis.

It was lighted by an opening in the roof, which formed at the same time, at outlet for the smoke. From this room (at the opposite end to that on which it opened into the entrance-hall), a passage, closed by a well-fastened door,* led into the chamber of the women.** This was also surrounded by a colonnade within, but only on three sides, and here the female inhabitants were accustomed to pass their time, when not employed, spinning or weaving, in the rooms lying near the back or garden-door*** as it was termed. Between these latter and the domestic offices, which lay on the right and left of the women's apartment, were the sleeping-rooms; these served also as places of security for the valuables of the house. The walls of the men's apartment were painted of a reddish-brown color, against which the outlines of some white marble carvings, the gift of a Chian sculptor,[27] stood out in sharp relief. The floor was covered with rich carpets from Sardis; low cushions of panthers' skins lay ranged along the colonnade; around the artistically wrought hearth stood quaint Egyptian settees, and small, delicately-carved tables of Thya wood,[28] on which lay all kinds of musical

über Gypsabgüsse. 1844. *S.* 3-28. Welcker, *antike Denkmäler.* I. *p.* 30. *and following.* Overbeck, *Geschichte der griech. Plastik.* I. *p.* 117. Drawn by O. Müller. *Denkmäler d. Kunst.* I. T. 6-8. Clarac, *Musée de sculpture p.* 815. 821 and following. In reference to Egyptian influence on early Greek art, the reader may be referred to *Epochen der Kunst bei den Griechen, Fr. Thiersch.* 1829. *Ueber einige ægyptische Kunstformen und ihre Entwickelung.* R. Lepsius.

27. The earliest marble sculptures are said to have been made in Chios.

28. Egyptian easy-chairs or settees. Wilkinson II. *plate* XI. *p.* 192 *and following.* Rosellini *mon. civ.* T. 60. 90-91. where there are sofas also, not unlike our own. Elegantly wrought seats, capable of accommodating several persons, on which are enthroned the owners of tombs, represented in reliefs, pictures and statues as gods and kings, are frequent. The Thya wood was brought from the oasis of Jupiter

* Metaulos Thyra. ** Gynaekonitis. *** Kepaia Thyra.

instruments, the flute, cithara and lyre. Numerous lamps of various and singular shapes, filled with Kiki oil,[29] hung against the walls. Some represented fire-spouting dolphins; others, strange winged monsters from whose jaws the flames issued; and these, blending their light with that from the hearth, illumined the apartment.

In this room a group of men were assembled, whose appearance and dress differed one from the other. A Syrian from Tyre, in a long crimson robe, was talking animatedly to a man whose decided features and crisp, curly, black hair proclaimed him an Israelite. The latter had come to Egypt to buy chariots and horses for Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah—the Egyptian equipages being the most sought after at that time.[30] Close

Ammon in the Libyan desert, and was so precious that Cicero gave a million sesterces or £8250. for one table made of this wood. At a large exhibition of the products of the province, held in Algiers, I saw a specimen of very heavy, firm, beautiful cedar, strongly resembling our weeping birch, and mentioned in the catalogue, probably from a mere conjecture of its compiler, as "Thya root and wood from Teniet-el-had."

29. Oil from the fruit of Palma Christi (ricinus communis), called by the Egyptians Kiki and used for the purposes of burning and anointing. Herod. II. 94. Strabo ed. *Casaub.* 824. PliniusXV. 7. Dioscor. IV. 164. On the monuments, more frequently on the papyrus rolls, and also in the great Papyrus Ebers the words kuku or kaka nuts occur. We might consider the latter identical with the oil-giving fruits of the ancient Egyptians, which were also called "Neter Kaka," sacred kiki nuts.

30. 1 Chronicles III. 17—19. Even Solomon, as early as 1000 B. C. sent for horses and chariots from Egypt. A horse cost 150, and a chariot 600 shekels. (£11. 6. and £45). A shekel, (translated by Luther "silberling") is worth about 18 pence. 1 Kings X. 28. 29. 2 Chronicles I. 16. 17. On the Egyptian monuments we find not only beautiful horses before Pharaoh's chariots, but even the manufactories where the chariots were built. The monuments prove also that neither horses nor chariots were introduced into Egypt earlier than 2000 B. C. The studs appear to have been kept on the large plains of northern Egypt. We hear of chief-officers over the stud (Stela with the era of 400 years) and of Pharaohs who considered the breeding and condition of the horse in Egypt as a matter of great importance, even before the

to him stood three Greeks from Asia Minor, the rich folds of whose garments (for they wore the costly dress of their native city Miletus), contrasted strongly with the plain and unadorned robe of Phryxus, the deputy commissioned to collect money for the temple of Apollo at Delphi, with whom they were in earnest conversation. Ten years before, the ancient temple had been consumed by fire; and at this time efforts were being made to build another, and a more beautiful one.[31]

Two of the Milesians, disciples of Anaximander and Anaximenes,[32] were staying then in Egypt, to study astronomy and the peculiar wisdom of the Egyptians at Heliopolis, and the third was a wealthy merchant and ship-owner, named Theopompus, who had settled at Naukratis. Rhodopis herself was engaged in a lively conversation with two Samian Greeks: the celebrated

26th dynasty, to which Amasis belonged. Pianchi's Stela. First-rate information on the Egyptian harness, and on the different parts of the vehicles, which in Syria were manufactured with art and ingenuity, at an early period is to be found in Chabas, *Analyse des Papyr-Anastasi* I. *Voyage d'un Egyptien etc.* A light chariot in perfect preservation (probably not a war trophy) belonging to an ancient Egyptian, was found in the tomb of its former owner, and is now in the Egyptian Museum at Florence.

31. Herodotus II. 180. Pindar. Pyth. 7. 9.

32. Anaximander of Miletus, born 611-546, was a celebrated geometrician, astronomer, philosopher and geographer. He was the author of a book on natural phenomena, drew the first map of the world on metal, and introduced into Greece a kind of clock which he seems to have borrowed from the Babylonians. He supposes a primary and not easily definable Being, by which the whole world is governed, and in which, though in himself infinite and without limits, everything material and circumscribed has its foundation. "Chaotic matter" represents in his theory the germ of all created things, from which water, earth, animals, nereids or fish-men, human beings &c. have had their origin. Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen* I. 170. Brandis. T. 1. P. 123. Anaximenes, 570-500, also a Milesian natural philosopher, considered air to be the primary matter from which all things proceeded. Plutarch *plac. phil.* I. 3. 6. Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen* I. Brandis T. 1. P. 141.

worker in metals, sculptor and goldsmith Theodorus,[33] and the Iambic poet Ibykus of Rhegium,[34] who had left the court of Polykrates for a time in order to become acquainted with Egypt, and were bearers of presents to Amasis from their ruler. Close to the fire lay Philoinus of Sybaris,[35] a corpulent man with strongly-marked features and a sensual expression of face; he was stretched at full-length on a couch covered with spotted furs, and amused himself by playing with his scented curls wreathed with gold, and with the golden chains which fell from his neck on to the long saffron-colored robe that clothed him down to his feet.

Rhodopis had a kind word for each of her guests, but at present she occupied herself exclusively with the two celebrated Samians; their talk was of art and poetry. The fire of youth still glowed in the eyes of the Thracian woman, her tall figure was still full and

33. Theodorus, descended from a Samian family celebrated as artists, did much towards the improvement of architecture and the artistic casting of metals. Thiersch, *Epochen der Kunst bei den Griechen* 1829. Brunn, *Künstlergeschichte* II. p. 380. Overbeck, i. d. *Berichten der kgl. sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, 1868. p. 68 and following. Bursian, *Jahn's Jahrbüchern* 1856. I. Abth. p. 509 and following.

34. Ibykus, from Lower Italy, flourished about 530. Polykrates attached this highly cultivated and impassioned poet to his court. The events which followed his violent death became a proverb among the ancients, and have become universally known in our own day through Schiller's *Kraniche des Ibykus*. Schneidewin collected the fragments of his writings. *Ibyc. carm. reliq.* and Bergk, *Poet. lyr. gr.* It is nowhere mentioned that he was ever in Egypt, but we know that from him the Greeks first learnt the identity of the morning and evening star, a fact long known to the Egyptians. Achilles Tatius. Isag. *in Arati Phænomen*, in the *Uranolog. Petavii p.* 136. See Lepsius *Chronologie, Einleitung p.* 91. This passage, and the friendship subsisting between Polykrates and Amasis, make it not improbable that Ibykus was at one time in Egypt.

35. Sybaris was a town in Lower Italy notorious throughout the ancient world for its luxury. According to Strabo it was founded by Achæans 262. About 510 it was conquered and destroyed by the Crotoniates and then rebuilt under the name of Thurii.

unbent; her hair, though grey, was wound round her beautifully formed head in luxuriant waves, and laid together at the back in a golden net, and a sparkling diadem shone above her lofty forehead.

Her noble Greek features were pale, but still beautiful and without a wrinkle, notwithstanding her great age; indeed her small mouth with its full lips, her white teeth, her eyes so bright and yet so soft, and her nobly-formed nose and forehead would have been beauty enough for a young maiden.

Rhodopis looked younger than she really was, though she made no attempt to disavow her age. Matronly dignity was visible in every movement, and the charm of her manner lay, not in a youthful endeavor to be pleasing, but in the effort of age to please others, considering their wishes, and at the same time demanding consideration in return.

Our two friends now presenting themselves in the hall, every eye turned upon them, and as Phanes entered leading his friend by the hand, the heartiest welcome met him from all sides; one of the Milesians indeed exclaimed: "Now I see what it is that was wanting to our assembly. There can be no merriment without Phanes."

And Philoinus, the Sybarite, raising his deep voice, but not allowing himself for a moment to be disturbed in his repose, remarked: "Mirth is a good thing, and if you bring that with you, be welcome to me also, Athenian."

"To me," said Rhodopis, turning to her new guests, "you are heartily welcome, but not more in your joy than if borne down by sadness. I know no greater pleasure than to remove the lines of care from a friend's

brow. Spartan, I venture to address you as a friend too, for the friends of my friends are my own."

Aristomachus bowed in silence, but Phanes, addressing himself both to Rhodopis and to the Sybarite, answered: "Well then, my friends, I can content you both. To you, Rhodopis, I must come for comfort, for soon, too soon I must leave you and your pleasant house; Philoinus however can still enjoy my mirth, as I cannot but rejoice in the prospect of seeing my beloved Hellas once more, and of quitting, even though involuntarily, this golden mouse-trap of a country."

"You are going away! you have been dismissed? Whither are you going?" echoed on all sides.

"Patience, patience, my friends," cried Phanes. "I have a long story to tell, but I will rather reserve it for the evening meal. And indeed, dear friend, my hunger is nearly as great as my distress at being obliged to leave you."

"Hunger is a good thing," philosophized the Sybarite once more, "when a man has a good meal in prospect."

"On that point you may be at ease, Philoinus," answered Rhodopis. "I told the cook to do his utmost, for the most celebrated epicure from the most luxurious city in the world, no less a person than Philoinus of Sybaris, would pass a stern judgment on his delicate dishes. Go, Knakias, tell them to serve the supper. Are you content now, my impatient guests? As for me, since I heard Phanes' mournful news, the pleasure of the meal is gone." The Athenian bowed, and the Sybarite returned to his philosophy. "Contentment is a good thing when every wish can be satisfied. I owe you thanks, Rhodopis, for your

appreciation of my incomparable native city. What says Anakreon?[36]

"To-day is ours—what do we fear?
To-day is ours—we have it here.
Let's treat it kindly, that it may
Wish at least with us to stay.
Let's banish business, banish sorrow;
To the gods belongs to-morrow." *

"Eh! Ibykus, have I quoted your friend the poet correctly, who feasts with you at Polykrates' banquets? Well, I think I may venture to say of my own poor self, that if Anakreon can make better verses, I understand the art of living quite as well as he, though he writes so many poems upon it. Why, in all his songs there is not one word about the pleasures of the table! Surely they are as important as love and play! I confess that the two last are dear to me also; still, I could exist without them, though in a miserable fashion, but without food, where should we be?"

The Sybarite broke into a loud laugh at his own joke; but the Spartan turned away from this conversation, drew Phryxus into a corner, and quite abandoning his usually quiet and deliberate manner, asked eagerly whether he had at last brought him the long wished for answer from the Oracle. The serious features of the Delphian relaxed, and thrusting his hand into the folds of his chiton,** he drew out a little roll of parchment-like sheepskin, on which a few lines were written.

The hands of the brave, strong Spartan trembled as

36. Anakreon of Teos was, at the time of our narrative, also living at the court of Polykrates. This celebrated, charming singer of love and wine will be often mentioned and quoted in our text. The passage above is to be found Anacr. *fragm. ed. Moebius* XV. His likeness as a statue is in the Villa Borghese at Rome. Copied in the *Abhandl. der k. sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Phil-hist.* Class III. p. 730 and following, with text by Otto Jahn.

* Translation by Cowley. ** An undergarment resembling a shirt.

he seized the roll, and his fixed gaze on its characters was as if it would pierce the skin on which they were inscribed.

Then, recollecting himself, he shook his head sadly and said: "We Spartans have to learn other arts than reading and writing; if thou canst, read me what Pythia says."

The Delphian glanced over the writing and replied: "Rejoice! Loxias* promises thee a happy return home; hearken to the prediction of the priestess."

"If once the warrior hosts from the snow-topped mountains descending
Come to the fields of the stream watering richly the plain,
Then shall the lingering boat to the beckoning meadows convey thee
Which to the wandering foot peace and a home will afford.
When those warriors come, from the snow-topped mountains descending,
Then will the powerful Five grant thee what long they refused."

To these words the Spartan listened with intense eagerness; he had them read over to him twice, then repeated them from memory, thanked Phryxus, and placed the roll within the folds of his garment.

The Delphian then took part in the general conversation, but Aristomachus repeated the words of the Oracle unceasingly to himself in a low voice, endeavoring to impress them on his memory, and to interpret their obscure import.

* A name given to Apollo on account of the dark and incomprehensible answers of his Oracle.

CHAPTER II.

THE doors of the supper-room now flew open. Two lovely, fair-haired boys, holding myrtle-wreaths, stood on each side of the entrance, and in the middle of the room was a large, low, brilliantly polished table, surrounded by inviting purple cushions.[37]

Rich nosegays adorned this table, and on it were placed large joints of roast meat, glasses and dishes of various shapes filled with dates, figs, pomegranates, melons and grapes, little silver beehives containing honey, and plates of embossed copper, on which lay delicate cheese from the island of Trinakria. In the midst was a silver table-ornament, something similar to an altar, from which arose fragrant clouds of incense.

At the extreme end of the table stood the glittering silver cup in which the wine was to be mixed.[38] This was of beautiful Æginetan workmanship, its crooked handles representing two giants, who appeared ready to sink under the weight of the bowl which they sustained.

37. It was most probably usual for each guest to have his own little table; but we read even in Homer of large tables on which the meals were served up. *Iliad.* IX. 206. 215. *Odyss.* I. 111. In the Symposium described by Xenophanes at about the date of our history, a table is mentioned, the appointments of which we have more especially followed in the following description, Xenoph. *fragm. ed.* Bergk. I. In the time of Homer people sat at table, but the recumbent position became universal in later times. See Overbeck, *Pompeii.* First ed. p. 376 and following.

38. The Greeks were not accustomed to drink unmingled wine. Zaleukus forbade to all citizens the pure juice of the grape under penalty of death, and Solon under very severe penalties, unless required as medicine. The usual mixture was composed of three-fifths water to two-fifths wine. *Schol. z. d. Rittern des Aristophanes. v.* 1184.

Like the altar, it was enwreathed with flowers, and a garland of roses or myrtle had been twined around the goblet of each guest.[39]

The entire floor was strewed with rose-leaves,[40] and the room lighted by many lamps which were hung against the smooth, white, stucco walls.

No sooner were the guests reclining on their cushions, than the fair-haired boys reappeared, wound garlands of ivy and myrtle around the heads and shoulders of the revellers, and washed their feet in silver basins.[41] The Sybarite, though already scented with all the perfumes of Arabia, would not rest until he was completely enveloped in roses and myrtle, and continued to occupy the two boys even after the carver had removed the first joints from the table in order to cut them up; but as soon as the first course, tunny-fish with mustard-sauce,[42] had been served, he forgot all subordinate matters, and became absorbed in the enjoyment of the delicious viands.

39. The Greeks, as well as the Egyptians, used drinking-cups of various shapes, and the most different materials. The graceful forms of the Greek drinking-vessels are well known, but even the Egyptians knew how to manufacture beautiful goblets. They were made of the precious metals, of bronze (such, according to Herodotus, were the drinking-vessels of the priests) of delicate clay partially glazed, (in the Berlin Museum with blue glaze) and also, but probably only seldom, of glass. Many were enamelled in colors, and made in the form of opening flowers, others represented the heads of animals or birds, from the throats of which the wine was drunk; others again were like our cups with handles. Wilkinson II. pp. 348-55. Rosellini, *mon. civ.* T. LIII-LXII. *Ebers, Aegypten u. d. B. Moses p.* 328. Originals are to be found in the Museums of Berlin, London, Paris, Leyden, Turin, &c.

40. The dining-hall of Cleopatra is said to have been strewn ell deep with roses. *Athenæus, Deipnos* IV. 148 *ed. Meineke.*

41. The Greeks always wore garlands at meals, and the feet of the guests were washed beforehand by slaves. Plato, *Symposion p.* 213. Water was also poured over the hands before eating. *Athen.* II. 60.

42. This dish is mentioned by Hipponax about the date of our narrative. Hipponact. *fragm.* 34. *ed.* Bergk.

Rhodopis, seated on a chair at the head of the table, near the wine-bowl, not only led the conversation, but gave directions to the slaves in waiting.[43]

She gazed on her cheerful guests with a kind of pride, and seemed to be devoting her attention to each exclusively, now asking the Delphian how he had succeeded in his mission, then the Sybarite whether he was content with the performances of her cook, and then listening eagerly to Ibykus, as he told how the Athenian, Phrynichus, had introduced the religious dramas of Thespis of Ikaria into common life, and was now representing entire histories from the past by means of choruses, recitative and answer.[44]

Then she turned to the Spartan, remarking, that to him alone of all her guests, instead of an apology for the simplicity of the meal, she felt she owed one for its luxury. The next time he came, her slave Knakias, who, as an escaped Helot,[45] boasted that he could cook a delicious blood-soup (here the Sybarite shuddered), should prepare him a true Lacedæmonian repast.

When the guests had eaten sufficiently they again washed their hands; the plates and dishes were removed, the floor cleansed, and wine and water poured into the

43. The women took their meals sitting. The Greeks, like the Egyptians, had chairs with backs and arms. The form of the solia or throne has become familiar to us from the discoveries at Pompeii and the representations of many gods and distinguished persons. It had a high, almost straight back, and supports for the arms. Usually a Symposiarch, or steward of the banquet, was chosen by lot; but in this case the office belongs naturally to Rhodopis. The duty of giving orders to the other servants, some of whom were brought by the guests, fell to the lot of one of the house-slaves.

44. At the time of our tale, the drama was in its origin. Thespis gave a dramatic form to the Dionysian choruses by the introduction of strophe and antistrophe, and the adoption of masks; and Phrynichus must be named as the first tragic poet.

45. The Spartan slaves, who often tried to escape from the service of their masters, a service generally described in too dark terms.

bowl. At last,[46] when Rhodopis had convinced herself that the right moment was come, she turned to Phanes, who was engaged in a discussion with the Milesians, and thus addressed him:

"Noble friend, we have restrained our impatience so long that it must surely now be your duty to tell us what evil chance is threatening to snatch you from Egypt and from our circle. You may be able to leave us and this country with a light heart, for the gods are wont to bless you Ionians with that precious gift from your very birth, but we shall remember you long and sadly. I know of no worse loss than that of a friend tried through years; indeed some of us have lived too long on the Nile not to have imbibed a little of the constant, unchanging Egyptian temperament. You smile, and yet I feel sure that long as you have desired to revisit your dear Hellas, you will not be able to leave us quite without regret. Ah, you admit this? Well, I knew I had not been deceived. But now tell us why you are obliged to leave Egypt, that we may consider whether it may not be possible to get the king's decree reversed, and so keep you with us."

Phanes smiled bitterly, and replied: "Many thanks, Rhodopis, for these flattering words, and for the kind intention either to grieve over my departure, or if possible, to prevent it. A hundred new faces will soon help you to forget mine, for long as you have lived on the Nile, you are still a Greek from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, and may thank the gods that you have remained so. I am a great friend of constancy too, but quite as great an enemy of folly,

46. The Symposium began after the real meal. Not till that was over did the guests usually adorn themselves with wreaths, wash their hands with Smegma or Smema (a kind of soap) and begin to drink.

and is there one among you who would not call it folly to fret over what cannot be undone? I cannot call the Egyptian constancy a virtue, it is a delusion. The men who treasure their dead for thousands of years, and would rather lose their last loaf than allow a single bone belonging to one of their ancestors to be taken from them,[47] are not constant, they are foolish. Can it possibly make me happy to see my friends sad? Certainly not! You must not imitate the Egyptians, who, when they lose a friend, spend months in daily-repeated lamentations over him. On the contrary, if you will sometimes think of the distant, I ought to say, of the departed, friend, (for as long as I live I shall never be permitted to tread Egyptian ground again), let it be with smiling faces; do not cry, 'Ah! why was Phanes forced to leave us?' but rather, 'Let us be merry, as Phanes used to be when he made one of our circle!' In this way you must celebrate my departure, as Simonides enjoined when he sang:

> "If we would only be more truly wise,
> We should not waste on death our tears and sighs,
> Nor stand and mourn o'er cold and lifeless clay
> More than one day.
>
> For Death, alas! we have no lack of time;
> But Life is gone, when scarcely at its prime,
> And is e'en, when not overfill'd with care
> But short and bare!"[48]

"If we are not to weep for the dead, how much less ought we to grieve for absent friends! the former have

47. An Egyptian, even when deeply involved in debt, was permitted to remove the mummies of his ancestors. He would give all he had rather than allow these to fall into decay, as in case of such neglect he was exposed to shame and ignominy during life, and his body denied burial at death. Diodor. I. 93.

48. Translation from Simonides *fragm. ed.* Bergk.

left us for ever, but to the latter we say at parting, 'Farewell, until we meet again'"

Here the Sybarite, who had been gradually becoming more and more impatient, could not keep silent any longer, and called out in the most woe begone tone: "Will you never begin your story, you malicious fellow? I cannot drink a single drop till you leave off talking about death. I feel cold already, and I am always ill, if I only think of, nay, if I only hear the subject mentioned, that this life cannot last forever." The whole company burst into a laugh, and Phanes began to tell his story:

"You know that at Sais I always live in the new palace; but at Memphis, as commander of the Greek body-guard which must accompany the king everywhere, a lodging was assigned me in the left wing of the old palace.[49]

49. Memphis is said to have been founded by Menes, whom most of the ancient chronologists, following Manetho, call the first king of Egypt. He is reputed to have dammed the Nile a hundred furlongs above the city, thereby forcing the river, which had formerly flowed close to the Libyan mountains, to leave its bed and take its course through the centre of the valley, half-way between the mountains bordering it on the east and west. Even in Herodotus' day, the embankment cutting off that curve of the Nile was carefully preserved and strengthened by the Persian government, as any breach would expose Memphis to the danger of being inundated. Although no traces of the work remain, the truth of this statement cannot be doubted, for at the village of Seft, the Nile flows westward, and if not again diverted toward the east by the island es-Shekame, would reach the Libyan Hills. His name has often been found on monuments, always placed first in the line of kings; it occupies this position on the tablet of kings discovered by Dümichen, which closes with Seti I. Menes (in Egyptian Mena) spite of the suspicion his name might excite, may be confidently considered a historical personage. See de Rougé, *Mém. sur les VI. premières dyn. ég.* According to Lepsius, who has critically examined every existing date and inscription, he reigned 3892 B. C. and this date, obtained in a strictly methodical way is remarkably verified by an astronomical calendar on the back of the Papyrus Ebers. His son and successor is said to have built the palace of Memphis, according to Manetho, a priest of Heliopolis, who in the year 250 B. C. translated the Egyptian sacred writings into Greek for the Ptolemaic Pharaohs.

"Since Psamtik the First,[50] Sais has always been the royal residence, and the other palaces have in consequence become somewhat neglected. My dwelling was really splendidly situated, and beautifully furnished; it would have been first-rate, if, from the first moment of

A few scanty remains near the villages Bedreschein and Mitrahenny—some large heaps of rubbish—the prostrate colossal statue of Rameses II. mentioned by classical writers, discovered by Caviglia and Slaone and now the property of the English, fragments of columns and statues, traces of the walls of the Ptah-temple, broken sherds, and smaller memorials in larger numbers, are all that now remain of this once gigantic city. Nevertheless it is possible to gain a tolerably accurate idea of its appearance. Narrow, and even in the twelfth century half a day's journey in length, its streets extended between the Nile and the Bahr Yusuf, terminating in the north near Ghizeh, in the south in the plain of the pyramids of Dashur. The quarter where the licentious worship of the Phœnician and Egyptian goddess of love was celebrated, and in which strangers were afterwards permitted to settle, was named Ta, or The World of Life. It was also called the Syrian quarter, and with its sacred groves undoubtedly lay toward the south. The royal palace stood on a hill, which still remains, about three-quarters of a kilometer east of Mitrahenny, from which at the present time all the pyramids can be overlooked, and whence the Pharaohs doubtless formerly directed the building of their mausoleums. The ancient quarter of Amhi, was particularly magnificent. Here stood the temples of the principal gods, none older or more renowned than that of Ptah, with which the whole history of the city is associated. The Mohammedan conquerors erected their residence on the right bank of the Nile at the point nearly opposite the most northern portion of Memphis, and here, near the fortified Babylon, rose the modern Cairo. The city of the dead at Memphis is in better preservation. The Pyramids stand on unmoved, and the Serapeum and the Apis tombs have been excavated by Mariette Bey, a Frenchman in the service of the Viceroy. The royal residences were not in the temples as many have asserted. The palaces of the Pharaohs, like the private houses of the Egyptians, seemed to have been constructed of much lighter and more perishable materials than the temples. The former were probably built of bricks made from the Nile mud, the latter almost without exception, of blocks of solid stone.

50. Psamtik I. better known by his Greek name Psametich,* belonged to the 26th, or the Saitic dynasty. He was the first to open a communication between Egypt and foreign countries. On this reign the inscriptions from the Apis tombs render such good service, that we are enabled to fix the date of Psamtik's accession to the throne on February 5th, 664 B. C.

* Or Psammetichus.

my entrance, a fearful annoyance had not made its appearance.

"In the day-time, when I was seldom at home, my rooms were all that could be wished, but at night it was impossible to sleep for the tremendous noise made by thousands of rats and mice under the old floors, and couches, and behind the hangings.

"Even in the first night an impudent mouse ran over my face.

"I was quite at a loss what to do, till an Egyptian soldier sold me two large cats, and these, in the course of many weeks, procured me some rest from my tormentors.

"Now, you are probably all aware that one of the charming laws of this most eccentric nation, (whose culture and wisdom, you, my Milesian friends, cannot sufficiently praise), declares the cat to be a sacred animal. Divine honors are paid to these fortunate quadrupeds as well as to many other animals, and he who kills a cat is punished with the same severity as the murderer of a human being."

Till now Rhodopis had been smiling, but when she perceived that Phanes' banishment had to do with his contempt for the sacred animals, her face became more serious. She knew how many victims, how many human lives, had already been sacrificed to this Egyptian superstition, and how, only a short time before, the king Amasis himself had endeavored in vain to rescue an unfortunate Samian, who had killed a cat, from the vengeance of the enraged populace.[51]

51. The cat was probably the most sacred of all the animals worshipped by the Egyptians. While others were deified only in particular districts, the cat was an object of adoration to all the subjects of the Pharaohs. Herod. (II. 66.) tells that when a house was on fire the

"Everything was going well," continued the officer, "when we left Memphis two years ago.

"I confided my pair of cats to the care of one of the Egyptian servants at the palace, feeling sure that these enemies of the rats would keep my dwelling clear for the future; indeed I began to feel a certain veneration for my deliverers from the plague of mice.

"Last year Amasis fell ill before the court could adjourn to Memphis, and we remained at Sais.

"At last, about six week ago, we set out for the city of the Pyramids.[52] I betook me to my old quarters; not the shadow of a mouse's tail was to be seen there, but instead, they swarmed with another race of animals

Egyptians never thought of extinguishing the fire until their cats were all saved, and that when a cat died, they shaved their heads in sign of mourning. Whoever killed one of these animals, whether intentionally or by accident, suffered the penalty of death, without any chance of mercy. Diod. (I. 81.) himself witnessed the murder of a Roman citizen who had killed a cat, by the Egyptian people; and this in spite of the authorities, who in fear of the powerful Romans, endeavored to prevent the deed. The bodies of the cats were carefully embalmed and buried, and their mummies are to be found in every Museum. The embalmed cat, carefully wrapped in linen bandages, is oftener to be met with than any other of the many animals thus preserved by the Egyptians. In spite of the great care bestowed on cats, there can have been no lack of mice in Egypt. In one nomos or province the shrew-mouse was sacred, and a satirical, obscene papyrus in Turin shows us a war between the cats and mice; the Papyrus Ebers contains poisons for mice. We ourselves possess a shrew-mouse exquisitely wrought in bronze. M. de Potonnier, the partner of the well-known founder of the overland route to India, Waghorn, told us in Cairo that he had once been attacked at night, by rats in an old walled building in Lower Egypt. After a lapse of more than twenty years, the scars caused by the bites of these loathsome creatures still remained. Quite recently, even after the Mussulman faith had penetrated into Egypt, cats were treated with special consideration. In Cairo a sum of money was bequeathed to feed starving cats, and each great caravan of pilgrims journeying to Mecca at the present time is accompanied by an old man, who carries several cats and is known as the cats' father. See the beautiful illustration by Gentz in Ebers *Ægypten in Bild und Wort* I. p. 103.

52. The great Pyramids lie to the west of Memphis. See Vol. II. p. 293.

not one whit dearer to me than their predecessors. The pair of cats had, during my two years' absence, increased twelvefold. I tried all in my power to dislodge this burdensome brood of all ages and colors, but in vain; every night my sleep was disturbed by horrible choruses of four-footed animals, and feline war-cries and songs.

"Every year, at the period of the Bubastis festival, all superfluous cats may be brought to the temple of the cat-headed goddess Pacht, where they are fed and cared for, or, as I believe, when they multiply too fast, quietly put out of the way. These priests are knaves!

"Unfortunately the journey to the said temple[53] did not occur during the time of our stay in Memphis; however, as I really could not tolerate this army of tormentors any longer, I determined at least to get rid of two families of healthy kittens with which their mothers had just presented me. My old slave Müs,[54] from his very name a natural enemy of cats, was told

53. The chief temple of the goddess Pacht (Bast), who was represented with the head of a cat, was at Bubastis in the Eastern Delta. The mummies of the cats were usually brought thither; some however have been discovered in other places, and more especially at the Serapeum. According to Herodotus she was similar to the Greek Artemis (Diana) and was called the Bubastian. Stephanus of Byzantium says also that the cat was called Bubastos in Egyptian. See Ebers' *Durch Gosen zum Sinai*, p. 15 and p. 482. The general name for the animal was Mau,—Mie. She seems also to have been honored as the deity who conferred the blessing of children and watched over their birth. Representations of her are to be found in Birch, *Gallery* p. 16 and following, and Wilkinson, *Man. and Customs* VI. *Pl.* 27. *and* 35. also Ebers' *Ægypten in Bild und Wort*, I. p. 102. Since the publication by Dümichen of the temple-inscriptions at Dendera there seems to be no longer any doubt that, in the goddess Bast, the Egyptians worshipped certain phases of Astarte (the Syrian Aphrodite, Venus urania). On the pilgrimage to Bubastis, see note 288 and text p. 294.

54. Mues, μῦς, a name not uncommon among the Greeks, signifies Mouse.

to kill the little creatures, put them into a sack, and throw them into the Nile.

"This murder was necessary, as the mewing of the kittens would otherwise have betrayed the contents of the sack to the palace-warders. In the twilight poor Müs betook himself to the Nile through the grove of Hathor,[55] with his perilous burden. But alas! the Egyptian attendant who was in the habit of feeding my cats, had noticed that two families of kittens were missing, and had seen through our whole plan.

"My slave took his way composedly through the great avenue of Sphinxes, and by the temple of Ptah,[56]

55. The goddess of Love, or Egyptian Venus, who also had a temple at Memphis. Her principal sanctuary was at Dendera (Ta-n-ta-rer, the land of the Nile horse, of the goddess of the Nile) where she is mentioned by all her titles; of these more than 300 are to be found at Edfu. Throughout she appears as the female, or receptive and productive principle, in opposition to the male, or generative; and cosmic, as the Earth, the exhibition of the Deity working in the visible world of nature. As the impersonation of fertility, she represents the fruitfulness of the fields, and as this is dependent on the Nile, so it is Isis-Hathor who "causeth the Nile to increase in his season." She is the sublime goddess of love, the great heavenly mother, who takes under her divine protection all the mothers of the earth, the giver of all good things in this life, the beautiful-visaged One, who fills Heaven and earth with her benefits. In later times she became transformed into a muse. The dance, song, mirth, even material enjoyments and intoxication, were under her protection; but she was principally revered as the goddess of love. The cord and tambourine in her hand denote the captivating, riveting power, and the pleasure, of love. Dendera was called Kantharonpolis, "the place of the cup," after her drinking-cup. She is called the great queen of the golden wreath, and the helper of mothers at the birth of their children. She was the goddess most beloved by the wives of the kings. Her sacred animal was the cow, and she generally appears in the form of a woman with a cow's head; the sun's disk rests between her horns, which suggest the crescent moon. *Drawings in Birch's Gallery p.* 19. Champollion, *Panthéon Egyptien.* T. 18. Rosell. *mon. d. culto. etc.* The best information on this goddess is to be had in Dümichen's *Bauurkunde von Dendera* L. 1865. Isis is the most sensual form of the goddess Hathor, —fertility as the idea of the organic world.

56. The temple of the great Memphian god Ptah, was one of the most celebrated buildings in Egypt. King Menes is said to have laid

holding the little bag concealed under his mantle. Already in the sacred grove he noticed that he was being followed, but on seeing that the men behind him stopped before the temple of Ptah and entered into conversation with the priests, he felt perfectly reassured and went on.

"He had already reached the bank of the Nile, when he heard voices calling him and a number of people running towards him in haste; at the same moment a stone whistled close by his head.

"Müs at once perceived the danger which was threatening him. Summoning all his strength he rushed down to the Nile, flung the bag in, and then with a beating heart, but as he imagined without the slightest evidence of guilt, remained standing on the shore. A few moments later he was surrounded by at least a hundred priests.

"Even the high-priest of Ptah, my old enemy Ptahotep, had not disdained to follow the pursuers in person.

"Many of the latter, and amongst them the perfidious palace-servant, rushed at once into the Nile,

the foundation, and the Pharaohs of the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th dynasties, who resided here, greatly enlarged it. In the 12th dynasty Amenemha III. known by the name of Möris, supplied the north of the temple with propylæ, and even the monarchs residing at Thebes after the dispersion of the Hyksos did not neglect to sumptuously adorn Ptah's sanctuary. Rameses II. is said to have placed statues of his wife, himself, and two of their children, in front of this temple. The colossal statue of the king was found by Caviglia and Slaone in 1820 and is still lying in the same place. Rameses III. according to the great Papyrus Harris, was the most lavish in the adornment of the edifice. Even the Ethiopians respected the sanctuary of Ptah, whose interior was magnificently finished by the first king of the 26th dynasty, to which Amasis belonged. Amasis erected statues, which were still lying on the ground in the days of Herodotus. Particulars of the Apis worshipped there will be given later. Some few remains of the temple are still extant, near the Arabian village of Mitrahenny.

and there, to our confusion, found the bag with its twelve little corpses, hanging entirely uninjured among the Papyrus-reeds and bean-tendrils. The cotton coffin was opened before the eyes of the high-priest, a troop of lower priests, and at least a thousand of the inhabitants of Memphis, who had hurried to the spot, and when the miserable contents were disclosed, there arose such fearful howls of anguish, and such horrible cries of mingled lamentation and revenge, that I heard them even in the palace.

"The furious multitude, in their wild rage, fell on my poor servant, threw him down, trampled on him and would have killed him, had not the all-powerful high-priest—designing to involve me, as author of the crime, in the same ruin—commanded them to cease and take the wretched malefactor to prison.

"Half an hour later I was in prison too.

"My old Müs took all the guilt of the crime on himself, until at last, by means of the bastinado, the high-priest forced him to confess that I had ordered the killing of the kittens, and that he, as a faithful servant, had not dared to disobey.

"The supreme court of justice,[57] whose decisions the king himself has no power to reverse, is composed of priests from Memphis, Heliopolis and Thebes: you

57. This court of justice, which may be compared with the Areopagus at Athens, and the Gerusia at Sparta, (Diod. I, 75.), was composed of 30 judges taken from the priestly caste, (10 from Heliopolis, 10 from Memphis, 10 from Thebes). The most eminent from among their number (ξνα τὸν ἄριστον) was chosen by them as president. All complaints and defences had to be presented in writing, that the judges might in no way be influenced by word or gesture. This tribunal was independent, even of the king's authority. Much information concerning the administration of justice has been obtained from the Papyrus Abbott, known by the name of the *Papyrus judiciaire*. Particulars and an account of their literature may be found in Ebers "*Durch Gosen zum Sinai*," p. 534 and following.

can therefore easily believe that they had no scruple in pronouncing sentence of death on poor Müs and my own unworthy Greek self. The slave was pronounced guilty of two capital offences: first, of the murder of the sacred animals, and secondly, of a twelve-fold pollution of the Nile through dead bodies. I was condemned as originator of this, (as they termed it) four-and-twenty-fold crime.[58] Müs was executed on the same day. May the earth rest lightly on him! I shall never think of him again as my slave, but as a friend and benefactor! My sentence of death was read aloud in the presence of his dead body, and I was already preparing for a long journey into the nether world, when the king sent and commanded a reprieve.

"I was taken back to prison. One of my guards, an Arcadian Taxiarch,* told me that all the officers of the guard and many of the soldiers, (altogether four thousand men) had threatened to send in their resignation, unless I, their commander, were pardoned.

"As it was beginning to grow dusk I was taken to the king.

"He received me graciously, confirmed the Taxiarch's statement with his own mouth, and said how grieved he should be to lose a commander so generally beloved. I must confess that I owe Amasis no grudge for his conduct to me, on the contrary I pity him. You should have heard how he, the powerful king, complained that he could never act according to his own wishes, that even in his most private affairs he was crossed and compromised by the priests and their influ-

58. According to the Egyptian law, the man who was cognizant of a crime was held equally culpable with the perpetrator.

* Commander of a Taxis, or captain of a company. Lysias, Apol. p. 162.

ence. Had it only depended on himself, he could easily have pardoned the transgression of a law, which I, as a foreigner, could not be expected to understand, and might (though unjustly) esteem as a foolish superstition. But for the sake of the priests he dare not leave me unpunished. The lightest penalty he could inflict must be banishment from Egypt.[59]

"He concluded his complaint with these words: 'You little know what concessions I must make to the priests in order to obtain your pardon. Why, our supreme court of justice is independent even of me, its king!'

"And thus I received my dismissal, after having taken a solemn oath to leave Memphis that very day, and Egypt, at latest, in three weeks.

"At the palace-gate I met Psamtik, the crown-prince. He has long been my enemy, on account of some vexatious matters which I cannot divulge, (you know them, Rhodopis). I was going to offer him my parting salutation, but he turned his back upon me, saying: 'Once more you have escaped punishment, Athenian; but you cannot elude my vengeance. Whithersoever you may go, I shall be able to find you!' 'That remains to be proved,' I answered, and putting myself and my possessions on board a boat, came to Naukratis. Here, by good fortune, I met my old friend Aristomachus of Sparta, who, as he was formerly in command of the Cyprian troops,[60] will most likely be nominated my successor. I should rejoice to know that

59. The punishment of exile seems not to have been employed against the native Egyptians; it could be easily imposed on foreigners whom it was desirable to get rid of.

60. King Amasis carried on a successful war against Cyprus. Herod. II. 178. Diod. I. 68.

such a first-rate man was going to take my place, if I did not at the same time fear that his eminent services will make my own poor efforts seem even more insignificant than they really were."

But here he was interrupted by Aristomachus, who called out: "Praise enough, friend Phanes! Spartan tongues are stiff; but if you should ever stand in need of my help, I will give you an answer in deeds, which shall strike the right nail on the head."

Rhodopis smiled her approval, and giving her hand to each, said: "Unfortunately, the only conclusion to be drawn from your story, my poor Phanes, is that you cannot possibly remain any longer in this country. I will not blame you for your thoughtlessness, though you might have known that you were exposing yourself to great danger for a mere trifle. The really wise and brave man never undertakes a hazardous enterprise, unless the possible advantage and disadvantage that may accrue to him from it can be reckoned at least as equal. Recklessness is quite as foolish, but not so blamable as cowardice, for though both do the man an injury, the latter alone can dishonor him.

"Your thoughtlessness, this time, has very nearly cost your life, a life dear to many, and which you ought to save for a nobler end. We cannot attempt to keep you here; we should thereby only injure ourselves without benefitting you. This noble Spartan must now take your place as head and representative of the Greek nation at the Egyptian court, must endeavor to protect us against the encroachment of the priests, and to retain for us the royal favor. I take your hand, Aristomachus, and will not let it go till you have promised that you will protect, to the utmost of your power, every Greek,

however humble, (as Phanes did before you), from the insolence of the Egyptians, and will sooner resign your office than allow the smallest wrong done to a Hellene to go unpunished. We are but a few thousands among millions of enemies, but through courage we are great, and unity must keep us strong. Hitherto the Greeks in Egypt have lived like brothers; each has been ready to offer himself for the good of all, and all for each, and it is just this unity that has made us, and must keep us, powerful.

"Oh! could we but bestow this precious gift on our mother-country and her colonies! would the tribes of our native land but forget their Dorian, Ionian or Æolian descent, and, contenting themselves with the one name of Hellenes, live as the children of one family, as the sheep of one flock,—then indeed we should be strong against the whole world, and Hellas would be recognized by all nations as the Queen of the Earth!"[61]

A fire glowed in the eyes of the grey-haired woman as she uttered these words; and the Spartan, grasping her hand impetuously and stamping on the floor with his wooden leg, cried: "By Zeus, I will not let a hair of their heads be hurt; but thou, Rhodopis, thou art worthy to have been born a Spartan woman."

"Or an Athenian," cried Phanes.

"An Ionian," said the Milesians, and the sculptor: "A daughter of the Samian Geomori—"

"But I am more, far more, than all these," cried the enthusiastic woman. "I am a Hellene!"

The whole company, even to the Jew and the

61. This longing desire for unity was by no means foreign to the Greeks, though we seldom hear it expressed. Aristotle, for example, says VII. 7.: "Were the Hellenes united into one state, they could command all the barbarous nations."

Syrian, were carried away by the intense feeling of the moment; the Sybarite alone remained unmoved, and, with his mouth so full as to render the words almost unintelligible, said:

"You deserve to be a Sybarite too, Rhodopis, for your roast beef is the best I have tasted since I left Italy, and your Anthylla wine[62] relishes almost as well as Vesuvian or Chian!"

Every one laughed, except the Spartan, who darted a look of indignation and contempt at the epicure.

In this moment a deep voice, hitherto unknown to us, shouted suddenly through the window, "A glad greeting to you, my friends!"

"A glad greeting," echoed the chorus of revellers, questioning and guessing who this late arrival might prove to be.

They had not long to wait, for even before the Sybarite had had time carefully to test and swallow another mouthful of wine, the speaker, Kallias, the son of Phænippus of Athens,[63] was already standing by the side of Rhodopis. He was a tall thin man of over sixty, with a head of that oval form which gives the impression of refinement and intellect. One of the richest among the Athenian exiles, he had twice bought the possessions of Pisistratus from the state, and twice been obliged to surrender them, on the tyrant's return to power. Looking round with his clear keen eyes on

62. Athenæus (I. 25.) calls the wine of Anthylla the best juice of the grape in Egypt. On the monuments different kinds of red and white wine are mentioned, for instance, the wine of Kakem. For particulars see Ebers, *Aegypten u. d. Bücher Moses, p.* 322.

63. A distinguished Athenian, whom we often hear mentioned at the date of our narrative. According to Herodotus VI. 122. he had been victor both in the horse and chariot-races.

this circle of acquaintances, he exchanged friendly greetings with all, and exclaimed:

"If you do not set a high value on my appearance among you this evening, I shall think that gratitude has entirely disappeared from the earth."

"We have been expecting you a long time," interrupted one of the Milesians. "You are the first man to bring us news of the Olympic games!"

"And we could wish no better bearer of such news than the victor of former days?" added Rhodopis.

"Take your seat," cried Phanes impatiently, "and come to the point with your news at once, friend Kallias."

"Immediately, fellow-countryman," answered the other. "It is some time ago now since I left Olympia. I embarked at Cenchreæ in a fifty-oared Samian vessel, the best ship that ever was built.

"It does not surprise me that I am the first Greek to arrive in Naukratis. We encountered terrific storms at sea, and could not have escaped with our lives, if the big-bellied Samian galley, with her Ibis beak and fish's tail[64] had not been so splendidly timbered and manned.

"How far the other homeward-bound passengers may have been driven out of their course, I cannot tell; we found shelter in the harbor of Samos, and were able to put to sea again after ten days.

We ran into the mouth of the Nile this morning. I went on board my own bark at once, and was so

64. The celebrated Samian ships of that day are thus described by Herodotus; they also often had boars' heads at the prow. At least this seems implied in Strabo's account, that the Æginetans had struck off the boars' heads from the ships they had captured. Herod, (III. 59,) tells the same with regard to the beaks of the ships.

favored by Boreas, who at least at the end of my voyage, seemed willing to prove that he still felt kindly towards his old Kallias, that I caught sight of this most friendly of all houses a few moments since. I saw the waving flag, the brightly lighted windows, and debated within myself whether to enter or not; but Rhodopis, your fascination proved irresistible, and besides, I was bursting with all my untold news, longing to share your feast, and to tell you, over the viands and the wine, things that you have not even allowed yourselves to dream of."

Kallias settled himself comfortably on one of the cushions, and before beginning to tell his news, produced and presented to Rhodopis a magnificent gold bracelet in the form of a serpent[65], which he had bought for a large sum at Samos, in the goldsmith's workshop of the very Theodorus who was now sitting with him at table.

"This I have brought for you,"[66] he said, turning to the delighted Rhodopis, "but for you, friend Phanes, I have something still better. Guess, who won the four-horse chariot-race?"

"An Athenian?" asked Phanes, and his face glowed with excitement; for the victory gained by one citizen at the Olympic games belonged to his whole people, and the Olympic olive-branch was the greatest honor and happiness that could fall to the lot, either of a single Hellene, or an entire Greek tribe.

65. See Th. Hope. *Costume* I. 138. Egyptian bracelets in the form of serpents are still extant.

66. In ancient days it was as usual as it is now to bring back little presents for friends from a journey. Theocritus brought the wife of his friend Nicias an ivory spindle and accompanied the gift with charming verses. For these we must refer our readers to F. Rückert's delightful translation.

"Rightly guessed, Phanes!" cried the bringer of this joyful news. "The first prize has been carried off by an Athenian; and not only so, your own cousin Cimon, the son of Kypselos, the brother of that Miltiades, who, nine Olympiads ago, earned us the same honor, is the man who has conquered this year[67]; and with the same steeds that gained him the prize at the last games. The fame of the Alkmæonidæ is, verily, darkening more and more before the Philaidæ[68]. Are not you proud, Phanes? do not you feel joy at the glory of your family?"

In his delight Phanes had risen from his seat, and seemed suddenly to have increased in stature by a whole head.

With a look of ineffable pride and consciousness of his own position, he gave his hand to the messenger of victory. The latter, embracing his countryman, continued:

"Yes, we have a right to feel proud and happy, Phanes; you especially, for no sooner had the judges

67. The second triumph won by the steeds of Cimon must have taken place, as Duncker correctly remarks (*Geschichte des Alterthums* IV. *p.* 343), about the year 528. The same horses won the race for the third time at the next Olympic games, consequently four years later. As token of his gratitude Cimon caused a monument to be erected in their honor in "the hollow way" near Athens. We may here remind our readers that the Greeks made use of the Olympic games to determine the date of each year. They took place every four years. The first was fixed 776 B. C. Each separate year was named the 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th of such or such an Olympiad.

68. Next to the Alkmæonidæ, the highest patrician family in Athens. They boasted of being descended from Ajax, the Homeric hero. Philäos, the son of Ajax of Salamis, is mentioned as their ancestor. The Miltiades and Cimon were their descendants. The first Miltiades, who married Kypselos' daughter, was one of the first archons in Athens, (Pausan. IV. 23. 5, VIII 39. 2,) and seems to have occupied the office in 664 and 659. Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, IV. p. 301, where the family genealogy, from the time of Miltiades, is related.

unanimously awarded the prize to Cimon, than he ordered the heralds to proclaim the tyrant Pisistratus as the owner of the splendid team, and therefore victor in the race. Pisistratus at once caused it to be announced that your family was free to return to Athens, and so now, Phanes, the long-wished for hour of your return home is awaiting you."

But at these words Phanes turned pale, his look of conscious pride changed into one of indignation, and he exclaimed:

"At this I am to rejoice, foolish Kallias? rather bid me weep that a descendant of Ajax should be capable of laying his well-won fame thus ignominiously at a tyrant's feet! No! I swear by Athene, by Father Zeus, and by Apollo, that I will sooner starve in foreign lands than take one step homeward, so long as the Pisistratidæ hold my country in bondage. When I leave the service of Amasis, I shall be free, free as a bird in the air; but I would rather be the slave of a peasant in foreign lands, than hold the highest office under Pisistratus. The sovereign power in Athens belongs to us, its nobles; but Cimon by laying his chaplet at the feet of Pisistratus has acknowledged the tyrants, and branded himself as their servant. He shall hear that Phanes cares little for the tyrant's clemency. I choose to remain an exile till my country is free, till her nobles and people govern themselves, and dictate their own laws. Phanes will never do homage to the oppressor, though all the Philaidæ, the Alkmæonidæ, and even the men of your own house, Kallias, the rich Daduchi[69], should fall down at his feet!"

69. Kallias was called one of the Daduchi "δᾳδοῦχος," because the right of carrying torches at the Eleusinian mysteries was hereditary in his family. Xenoph. *Hell.* VI. 3. 2.

With flashing eyes he looked round on the assembly; Kallias too scrutinized the faces of the guests with conscious pride, as if he would say:

"See, friends, the kind of men produced by my glorious country!"

Taking the hand of Phanes again, he said to him:

"The tyrants are as hateful to me as to you, my friend; but I have seen, that, so long as Pisistratus lives, the tyranny cannot be overthrown. His allies, Lygdamis of Naxos and Polykrates of Samos, are powerful; but the greatest danger for our freedom lies in his own moderation and prudence. During my recent stay in Greece I saw with alarm that the mass of the people in Athens love their oppressor like a father. Notwithstanding his great power, he leaves the commonwealth in the enjoyment of Solon's constitution. He adorns the city with the most magnificent buildings. They say that the new temple of Zeus, now being built of glorious marble by Kallæschrus, Antistates and Porinus (who must be known to you, Theodorus), will surpass every building that has yet been erected by the Hellenes[70]. He understands how to attract poets and artists of all kinds to Athens, he has had the poems of Homer put into writing, and the prophecies of Musæus collected by Onomakritus. He lays out new streets and arranges fresh festivals; trade flourishes under his rule, and the people find themselves well off, in spite of the many taxes laid upon them. But what are the people? a vulgar multitude who, like the gnats, fly towards every thing brilliant, and, so long as the taper burns, will

70. Vitruv. 7. *præf.* 15. Pausan I. 18. *Dicæarch. fragm. ed.* Müller, 59. It is said to have been surpassed only by the temple of Artemis (Diana) at Ephesus.

continue to flutter round it, even though they burn their wings in doing so. Let Pisistratus' torch burn out, Phanes, and I'll swear that the fickle crowd will flock around the returning nobles, the new light, just as they now do around the tyrant.

"Give me your hand once more, you true son of Ajax; for you, my friends, I have still many an interesting piece of news untold.

"The chariot-race, as I have just related, was won by Cimon who gave the olive-branch to Pisistratus. Four finer horses than his I never saw. Arkesilaus of Cyrene, Kleosthenes of Epidamnus[71], Aster of Sybaris, Hekatæus of Miletus and many more had also sent splendid teams. Indeed the games this time were more than brilliant. All Hellas had sent deputies. Rhoda of the Ardeates, in distant Iberia*, the wealthy Tartessus, Sinope in the far East on the shores of Pontus, in short, every tribe that could boast of Hellenic descent was well represented. The Sybarite deputies were of a dazzling beauty; the Spartans, homely and simple, but handsome as Achilles, tall and strong as Hercules; the Athenians remarkable for their supple limbs and graceful movements, and the men of Crotona were led by Milo,[72] strongest of mortal birth. The Samian and Milesian deputies vied in splendor and gorgeousness of

71. Kleosthenes won the chariot-race three Olympiads later with his four horses Phœnix, Korax, Samos and Knakias, and caused monuments to be erected in their honor. Pausanias IV. 14.

72. Incredible feats of strength are related of this strongest of all Greeks. He conquered seven times at Olympia, nine times at Nemea, six times in the Pythian games (Delphi), ten times in the Isthmian. Diod. XII. 9. That he won the wreath in the 62nd Olympiad we know positively. Krause, *Olympia, p.* 327. He can therefore have wrestled in the 63rd, that is, 528 B. C.

* Iberia (Spain) Rhoda is in the modern province of Catalonia—Tartessus in Andalusia.

attire with those from Corinth and Mitylene: the flower of the Greek youth was assembled there, and, in the space allotted to spectators, were seated, not only men of every age, class and nation, but many virgins, fair and lovely maidens, who had come to Olympia, more especially from Sparta, in order to encourage the men during the games by their acclamations and applause[73]. The market was set up beyond the Alphæus, and there traders from all parts of the world were to be seen; Greeks, Carthaginians, Lydians, Phrygians and shrewd Phœnicians from Palestine settled weighty business transactions, or offered their goods to the public from tents and booths. But how can I possibly describe to you the surging throngs of the populace, the echoing choruses, the smoking festal hecatombs, the bright and variegated costumes, the sumptuousness of the equipages, the clang of the different dialects and the joyful cries of friends meeting again after years of separation; or the splendid appearance of the envoys, the crowds of lookers-on and venders of small wares, the brilliant effect produced by the masses of spectators, who filled to overflowing the space allotted to them, the eager suspense during the progress of the games, and the never ending shouts of joy when the victory was decided; the solemn investiture with the olive-branch, cut with a golden knife by the Elean boy, (whose parents must both be living), from the sacred tree in the Altis[74]

73. Meyer, *Olympische Spiele.* Schömann, *Privat-alterthümer and others.* Married women were forbidden, under penalty of death, to appear among the spectators.

74. Altis was the name of the sacred grove of plane and olive trees, which, enclosed by a wall, lay between the river Alphœus and the brook Kladeus. Pindar *Olymp.* VIII. Recently German scientists, instigated by E. Curtius, have succeeded, at the expense of their government, in excavating the foundations of the temple of Olympia and finding interesting sculptures on its pediments.

planted so many centuries ago by Hercules himself; or lastly, the prolonged acclamations which, like peals of thunder, resounded in the Stadium, when Milo of Crotona appeared, bearing on his shoulders the bronze statue of himself cast by Dameas, and carried it through the Stadium[75] into the Altis[76] without once tottering. The weight of the metal would have crushed a bull to the earth: but borne by Milo it seemed like a child in the arms of its Lacedæmonian nurse[77].

"The highest honors (after Cimon's) were adjudged to a pair of Spartan brothers, Lysander and Maro, the sons of Aristomachus. Maro was victor in the foot-race, but Lysander presented himself, amidst the shouts of the spectators, as the opponent of Milo! Milo the invincible, victor at Pisa, and in the Pythian and Isthmian combats[78]. Milo was taller and stouter than the Spartan, who was formed like Apollo, and seemed from his great youth scarcely to have passed from under the hands of the schoolmaster.

"In their naked beauty, glistening with the golden oil, the youth and the man stood opposite to one another, like a panther and a lion preparing for the combat. Before the onset, the young Lysander raised his hands imploringly to the gods, crying: 'For my father,

75. The scene of the combats.

76. Pausanias VI. 14. Euseb. *Chron.* 6. *Ol.* 72. An epigram by Simonides *Fragm.* 179. Bergk. Hartung 222.

Fair statue this of Milo fair, who won
Seven times the Pisan prize, and quailed to none.*

Seven times would probably have been better than six, for though only six of Milo's victories are spoken of elsewhere, yet in *Anthol. Plan.* 24. the word ἑξάκι is used, not ἑπτάκι.

77. The Spartan nurses were celebrated and sought for through the whole of Greece.

78. The groups of the wrestlers were decided by lot after their free birth and unimpeachability of character had been established.

* Translated by Sterling.

my honor, and the glory of Sparta!' The Crotonian looked down on the youth with a smile of superiority; just as an epicure looks at the shell of the languste[79] he is preparing to open.

"And now the wrestling began. For some time neither could succeed in grasping the other. The Crotonian threw almost irresistible weight into his attempts to lay hold of his opponent, but the latter slipped through the iron grip like a snake. This struggle to gain a hold lasted long, and the immense multitude watched silently, breathless from excitement. Not a sound was to be heard but the groans of the wrestlers and the singing of the nightingales in the grove of the Altis. At last, the youth succeeded, by means of the cleverest trick I ever saw, in clasping his opponent firmly. For a long time, Milo exerted all his strength to shake him off, but in vain, and the sand of the Stadium was freely moistened by the great drops of sweat, the result of this Herculean struggle.

"More and more intense waxed the excitement of the spectators, deeper and deeper the silence, rarer the cries of encouragement, and louder the groans of the wrestlers. At last Lysander's strength gave way. Immediately a thousand voices burst forth to cheer him on. He roused himself and made one last superhuman effort to throw his adversary: but it was too late. Milo had perceived the momentary weakness. Taking advantage of it, he clasped the youth in a deadly embrace; a full black stream of blood welled from Lysander's beautiful lips, and he sank lifeless to the earth from the

79. The languste is the delicious clawless lobster which is found on the coasts of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and sometimes even on the French shores of the Atlantic.

wearied arms of the giant. Democedes[80], the most celebrated physician of our day, whom you Samians will have known at the court of Polycrates, hastened to the spot, but no skill could now avail the happy Lysander,—he was dead.

"Milo was obliged to forego the victor's wreath[81]; and the fame of this youth will long continue to sound through the whole of Greece. I myself would rather be the dead Lysander, son of Aristomachus, than the living Kallias growing old in inaction away from his country. Greece, represented by her best and bravest, carried the youth to his grave, and his statue is to be placed in the Altis by those of Milo of Crotona and Praxidamas of Ægina[82]. At length the heralds proclaimed the sentence of the judges: 'To Sparta be awarded a victor's wreath for the dead, for the noble Lysander hath been vanquished, not by Milo, but by Death, and he who could go forth unconquered from a two hours' struggle with the strongest of all Greeks, hath well deserved the olive-branch.'"

Here Kallias stopped a moment in his narrative. During his animated description of these events, so precious to every Greek heart, he had forgotten his listeners, and, gazing into vacancy, had seen only the

80. This celebrated physician was born at Crotona in Lower Italy, in the middle of the sixth century B. C. He is said to have left his native land in consequence of his father's severity, and to have been employed as physician, first by the Pisistratidæ for the yearly sum of £375., and then by Polykrates for more than £600. Still later he was forced to enter the Persian service, where he preserved his reputation for skill, and from which he at last escaped by stratagem. In the year 510 he reappeared in Crotona and married the daughter of the celebrated athlete Milo.

81. By the laws of the games the wrestler, whose adversary died, had no right to the prize of victory.

82. Victor in the pugilistic combat, 59th Olympiad.

figures of the wrestlers as they rose before his remembrance. Now, on looking round, he perceived, to his astonishment, that the grey-haired man with the wooden leg, whom he had already noticed, though without recognizing him, had hidden his face in his hands and was weeping. Rhodopis was standing at his right hand. Phanes at his left, and the other guests were gazing at the Spartan, as if he had been the hero of Kallias's tale. In a moment the quick Athenian perceived that the aged man must stand in some very near relation to one or other of the victors at Olympia; but when he heard that he was Aristomachus—the father of that glorious pair of brothers, whose wondrous forms were constantly hovering before his eyes like visions sent down from the abodes of the gods, then he too gazed on the sobbing old man with mingled envy and admiration, and made no effort to restrain the tears which rushed into his own eyes, usually so clear and keen. In those days men wept, as well as women, hoping to gain relief from the balm of their own tears. In wrath, in ecstasy of delight, in every deep inward anguish, we find the mighty heroes weeping, while, on the other hand, the Spartan boys would submit to be scourged at the altar of Artemis Orthia, and would bleed and even die under the lash without uttering a moan, in order to obtain the praise of the men.

For a time every one remained silent, out of respect to the old man's emotion. But at last the stillness was broken by Joshua the Jew, who began thus, in broken Greek:

"Weep thy fill, O man of Sparta! I also have known what it is to lose a son. Eleven years have passed since I buried him in the land of strangers, by the

waters of Babylon, where my people pined in captivity. Had yet one year been added unto the life of the beautiful child, he had died in his own land, and had been buried in the sepulchres of his fathers. But Cyrus the Persian (Jehovah bless his posterity!) released us from bondage one year too late, and therefore do I weep doubly for this my son, in that he is buried among the enemies of my people Israel. Can there be an evil greater than to behold our children, who are unto us as most precious treasure, go down into the grave before us? And, may the Lord be gracious unto me!—to lose so noble a son, in the dawn of his early manhood, just at the moment he had won such brilliant renown, must indeed be a bitter grief, a grief beyond all others!"

Then the Spartan took away his hands from before his face; he was looking stern, but smiled through his tears, and answered:

"Phœnician, you err! I weep not for anguish, but for joy, and would have gladly lost my other son, if he could have died like my Lysander."

The Jew, horrified at these, to him, sinful and unnatural words, shook his head disapprovingly; but the Greeks overwhelmed the old man with congratulations, deeming him much to be envied. His great happiness made Aristomachus look younger by many years, and he cried to Rhodopis: "Truly, my friend, your house is for me a house of blessing; for this is the second gift that the gods have allowed to fall to my lot, since I entered it." "What was the first?" asked Rhodopis. "A propitious oracle." "But," cried Phanes, "you have forgotten the third; on this day the gods have blessed you with the acquaintance of Rhodopis. But,

tell me, what is this about the oracle?" "May I repeat it to our friends?" asked the Delphian.

Aristomachus nodded assent, and Phryxus read aloud a second time the answer of the Pythia:

"If once the warrior hosts from the snow-topped mountains descending
Come to the fields of the stream watering richly the plain,
Then shall the lingering boat to the beckoning meadows convey thee
Which to the wandering foot peace and a home will afford.
When those warriors come from the snow-topped mountains descending
Then will the powerful Five grant thee what they long refused."

Scarcely was the last word out of his mouth, when Kallias the Athenian, springing up, cried: "In this house, too, you shall receive from me the fourth gift of the gods. Know that I have kept my rarest news till last: the Persians are coming to Egypt!"

At this every one, except the Sybarite, rushed to his feet, and Kallias found it almost impossible to answer their numerous questions. "Gently, gently, friends," he cried at last; "let me tell my story in order, or I shall never finish it at all. It is not an army, as Phanes supposes, that is on its way hither, but a great embassy from Cambyses, the present ruler of the most powerful kingdom of Persia. At Samos I heard that they had already reached Miletus, and in a few days they will be here. Some of the king's own relations, are among the number, the aged Crœsus, king of Lydia, too; we shall behold a marvellous splendor and magnificence! Nobody knows the object of their coming, but it is supposed that King Cambyses wishes to conclude an alliance with Amasis; indeed some say the king solicits the hand of Pharaoh's daughter."

"An alliance?" asked Phanes, with an incredulous

shrug of the shoulders. "Why the Persians are rulers over half the world already. All the great Asiatic powers have submitted to their sceptre; Egypt and our own mother-country, Hellas, are the only two that have been spared by the conqueror."

"You forget India with its wealth of gold, and the great migratory nations of Asia," answered Kallias. "And you forget moreover, that an empire, composed like Persia of some seventy nations or tribes of different languages and customs, bears the seeds of discord ever within itself, and must therefore guard against the chance of foreign attack; lest, while the bulk of the army be absent, single provinces should seize the opportunity and revolt from their allegiance. Ask the Milesians how long they would remain quiet if they heard that their oppressors had been defeated in any battle?"

Theopompus, the Milesian merchant, called out, laughing at the same time: "If the Persians were to be worsted in one war, they would at once be involved in a hundred others, and we should not be the last to rise up against our tyrants in the hour of their weakness!"

"Whatever the intentions of the envoys may be," continued Kallias, "my information remains unaltered; they will be here at the latest in three days."

"And so your oracle will be fulfilled, fortunate Aristomachus!" exclaimed Rhodopis, "for see, the warrior hosts can only be the Persians. When they descend to the shores of the Nile, then 'the powerful Five,' your Ephori[83] will change their decision, and you,

83. The five Ephori of Sparta were appointed to represent the absent kings during the Messenian war. In later days the nobles made use of the Ephori as a power, which, springing immediately from their own body, they could oppose to the kingly authority. Being the highest magistrates in all judicial and educational matters, and in

the father of two Olympian victors, will be recalled to your native land. Fill the goblets again, Knakias. Let us devote this last cup to the manes of the glorious Lysander; and then I advise you to depart, for it is long past midnight, and our pleasure has reached its highest point. The true host puts an end to the banquet when his guests are feeling at their best. Serene and agreeable recollections will soon bring you hither again; whereas there would be little joy in returning to a house where the remembrance of hours of weakness, the result of pleasure, would mingle with your future enjoyment." In this her guests agreed, and Ibykus named her a thorough disciple of Pythagoras, in praise of the joyous, festive evening.

Every one prepared for departure. The Sybarite, who had been drinking deeply in order to counteract the very inconvenient amount of feeling excited by the conversation, rose also, assisted by his slaves, who had to be called in for this purpose.[84]

While he was being moved from his former comfortable position, he stammered something about a "breach of hospitality;" but, when Rhodopis was about to give him her hand at parting, the wine gained the ascendancy and he exclaimed, "By Hercules, Rhodopis, you get rid of us as if we were troublesome creditors. It is not my custom to leave a supper so long as I can

everything relating to the moral police of the country, the Ephori soon found means to assert their superiority, and on most occasions over that of the kings themselves. Every patrician who was past the age of thirty, had the right to become a candidate yearly for the office. Aristot. *Polit*, II. *and* IV. Laërt. *Diog.* I. 68.

84. The Greeks were usually accompanied by their slaves when they went to entertainments. Thus for instance, according to Plato, Alcibiades brought servants with him when he attended the Symposium of Agathon.

stand, still less to be turned out of doors like a miserable parasite!"

"Hear reason, you immoderate Sybarite," began Rhodopis, endeavoring with a smile to excuse her proceeding. But these words, in Philoinus' half-intoxicated mood, only increased his irritation; he burst into a mocking laugh, and staggering towards the door, shouted: "Immoderate Sybarite, you call me? good! here you have your answer: Shameless slave! one can still perceive the traces of what you were in your youth. Farewell then, slave of Iadmon and Xanthus, freedwoman of Charaxus!" He had not however finished his sentence, when Aristomachus rushed upon him, stunned him with a blow of his fist, and carried him off like a child down to the boat in which his slaves were waiting at the garden-gate.

CHAPTER III.

THE guests were all gone. Their departing mirth and joy had been smitten down by the drunkard's abusive words, like fresh young corn beneath a hailstorm. Rhodopis was left standing alone in the empty, brightly decorated (supper-room). Knakias extinguished the colored lamps on the walls, and a dull, mysterious half-light took the place of their brilliant rays, falling scantily and gloomily on the piled-up plates and dishes, the remnants of the meal, and the seats and cushions, pushed out of their places by the retiring guests. A cold breeze came through the open door, for the dawn was at hand, and just before sunrise, the air is generally un-

pleasantly cool in Egypt. A cold chill struck the limbs of the aged woman through her light garments. She stood gazing tearlessly and fixedly into the desolate room, whose walls but a few minutes before had been echoing with joy and gladness, and it seemed to her that the deserted guest-chamber must be like her own heart. She felt as if a worm were gnawing there, and the warm blood congealing into ice.

Lost in these thoughts, she remained standing till at last her old female slave appeared to light her to her sleeping apartment.

Silently Rhodopis allowed herself to be undressed, and then, as silently, lifted the curtain which separated a second sleeping apartment from her own. In the middle of this second room stood a bedstead of maple-wood, and there, on white sheets spread over a mattress of fine sheep's wool, and protected from the cold by bright blue coverlets[85], lay a graceful, lovely girl asleep; this was Rhodopis' granddaughter, Sappho. The rounded form and delicate figure seemed to denote one already in opening maidenhood, but the peaceful, blissful smile could only belong to a harmless, happy child.

One hand lay under her head, hidden among the thick dark brown hair, the other clasped unconsciously a little amulet of green stone[86], which hung round her

85. Becker, *Charikles* III. 67. Pollux X. 67. See also the picture of a bed from a painting on the wall of a Pompeian room. A. Rich, under *lectulus*. The ancient bedsteads were made of wood, bronze or ivory; they were also frequently built of bricks like a step 7 to 8 feet long, and 2 to 2 1-2 feet high, whose outer edge was sometimes a little raised, and on which were laid mattresses, coverlids, etc.

86. The ancient Greeks constantly wore amulets, as protection against evil, and to ensure a lasting prosperity. On this see especially Arditi: *Il fascino e l'amuleto; presso gli antichi.* Among the ancient Egyptians however we find the most frequent use of these charms. They were not only supposed to avert misfortune from the living, but also from the souls of the dead.

neck. Over her closed eyes the long lashes trembled almost imperceptibly, and a delicate pink flush came and went on the cheek of the slumberer. The finely-cut nostrils rose and fell with her regular breathing, and she lay there, a picture of innocence, of peace, smiling in dreams, and of the slumber that the gods bestow on early youth, when care has not yet come.

Softly and carefully, crossing the thick carpets[87] on tiptoe, the grey-haired woman approached, looked with unutterable tenderness into the smiling, childish face, and, kneeling down silently by the side of the bed, buried her face in its soft coverings, so that the girl's hand just came in contact with her hair. Then she wept, and without intermission; as though she hoped with this flood of tears to wash away not only her recent humiliation, but with it all other sorrow from her mind.

At length she rose, breathed a light kiss on the sleeping girl's forehead, raised her hands in prayer towards heaven, and returned to her own room, gently and carefully as she had come.

At her own bedside she found the old slave-woman, still waiting for her.

"What do you want so late, Melitta?" said Rhodopis, kindly, under her breath. "Go to bed; at your age it is not good to remain up late, and you know that I do not require you any longer. Good night! and do not come to-morrow until I send for you. I shall not be able to sleep much to-night, and shall be thankful if the morning brings me a short repose."

87. Though the carpets of Babylon and Sardis were especially famous, those of Egypt were praised even by Homer, who calls them τάπητος. *Odyss.* IV. 124. Theocritus calls the purple carpets of Alexandria softer than sleep. There were costly Egyptian carpets with wool on both sides. (ἀμφίταποι). *Athen.* V. 197.

The woman hesitated; it seemed that she had something on her mind which she feared to utter.

"There is something you want to ask me?" said Rhodopis.

Still the old slave hesitated.

"Speak!" said Rhodopis, "speak at once, and quickly."

"I saw you weeping," said the slave-woman, "you seem ill or sad; let me watch this night by your bedside. Will you not tell me what ails you? You have often found that to tell a sorrow lightens the heart and lessens the pain. Then tell me your grief to-day too; it will do you good, it will bring back peace to your mind."

"No," answered the other, "I cannot utter it." And then she continued, smiling bitterly: "I have once more experienced that no one, not even a god, has power to cancel the past of any human being, and that, in this world, misfortune and disgrace are one and the same. Good night, leave me, Melitta!"

At noon on the following day, the same boat, which, the evening before, had carried the Athenian and the Spartan, stopped once more before Rhodopis' garden.

The sun was shining so brightly, so warmly and genially in the dark blue Egyptian sky, the air was so pure and light, the beetles were humming so merrily, the boatmen singing so lustily and happily, the shores of the Nile bloomed in such gay, variegated beauty, and were so thickly peopled, the palm-trees, sycamores, bananas and acacias were so luxuriant in foliage and blossom, and over the whole landscape the rarest and most glorious gifts seemed to have been poured out with such divine munificence, that a passer-by must

have pronounced it the very home of joy and gladness, a place from which sadness and sorrow had been forever banished.

How often we fancy, in passing a quiet village hidden among its orchards, that this at least must be the abode of peace, and unambitious contentment! But alas! when we enter the cottages, what do we find? there, as everywhere else, distress and need, passion and unsatisfied longing, fear and remorse, pain and misery; and by the side of these, Ah! how few joys! Who would have imagined on coming to Egypt, that this luxuriant, laughing sunny land, whose sky is always unclouded, could possibly produce and nourish men given to bitterness and severity? that within the charming, hospitable house of the fortunate Rhodopis, covered and surrounded, as it was, with sweet flowers, a heart could have been beating in the deepest sadness? And, still more, who among all the guests of that honored, admired Thracian woman, would have believed that this sad heart belonged to her? to the gracious, smiling matron, Rhodopis herself?

She was sitting with Phanes in a shady arbor near the cooling spray of a fountain. One could see that she had been weeping again, but her face was beautiful and kind as ever. The Athenian was holding her hand and trying to comfort her.

Rhodopis listened patiently, and smiled the while; at times her smile was bitter, at others it gave assent to his words. At last however she interrupted her well-intentioned friend, by saying:

"Phanes, I thank you. Sooner or later this last disgrace must be forgotten too. Time is clever in the healing art. If I were weak I should leave Naukratis

and live in retirement for my grandchild alone; a whole world, believe me, lies slumbering in that young creature. Many and many a time already I have longed to leave Egypt, and as often have conquered the wish. Not because I cannot live without the homage of your sex; of that I have already had more than enough in my life, but because I feel that I, the slave-girl and the despised woman once, am now useful, necessary, almost indispensable indeed, to many free and noble men. Accustomed as I am, to an extended sphere of work, in its nature resembling a man's, I could not content myself in living for one being alone, however dear. I should dry up like a plant removed from a rich soil into the desert, and should leave my grandchild desolate indeed, three times orphaned, and alone in the world. No! I shall remain in Egypt.

"Now that you are leaving, I shall be really indispensable to our friends here. Amasis is old; when Psamtik comes to the throne we shall have infinitely greater difficulties to contend with than heretofore. I must remain and fight on in the fore-front of our battle for the freedom and welfare of the Hellenic race. Let them call my efforts unwomanly if they will. This is, and shall be, the purpose of my life, a purpose to which I will remain all the more faithful, because it is one of those to which a woman rarely dares devote her life. During this last night of tears I have felt that much, very much of that womanly weakness still lingers in me which forms at once the happiness and misery of our sex. To preserve this feminine weakness in my granddaughter, united with perfect womanly delicacy, has been my first duty; my second to free myself entirely from it. But a war against one's own nature cannot be

carried on without occasional defeat, even if ultimately successful. When grief and pain are gaining the upper-hand and I am well nigh in despair, my only help lies in remembering my friend Pythagoras[88], that noblest among men, and his words: 'Observe a due proportion in all things, avoid excessive joy as well as complaining grief, and seek to keep thy soul in tune and harmony like a well-toned harp.' This Pythagorean inward peace, this deep, untroubled calm, I see daily before me in my Sappho; and struggle to attain it myself, though many a stroke of fate untunes the chords of my poor heart. I am calm now! You would hardly believe what power the mere thought of that first of all thinkers, that calm, deliberate man, whose life acted on mine like sweet, soft music, has over me. You knew him, you can understand what I mean. Now, mention your wish; my heart is as calmly quiet as the Nile waters which are flowing by so quietly, and I am ready to hear it, be it good or evil."

"I am glad to see you thus," said the Athenian. "If you had remembered the noble friend of wisdom, as Pythagoras was wont to call himself,[89] a little sooner, your soul would have regained its balance yesterday. The master enjoins us to look back every evening on the events, feelings and actions of the day just past.

88. There is no question that Pythagoras visited Egypt during the reign of Amasis, probably towards the middle of the 6th century (according to our reckoning, about 536 B. C.) Herod. II. 81. 123. Diod. I. 98. Chæremon *in Porphyrius de abstin.* IV. Iamblichus *vit. Pythag.* 35. Rich information about Pythagoras is to be found in the works of the very learned scholar Roeth, *Geschichte unserer Abendländer, Philos. Vol.* II. who is however occasionally much too bold in his conjectures.

89. Pythagoras was the first among Greek thinkers (speculators). He would not take the name of a wise man or "sage," but called himself "Philosophos," or a "friend of wisdom."

Now had you done this, you would have felt that the unfeigned admiration of all your guests, among whom were men of distinguished merit, outweighed a thousandfold the injurious words of a drunken libertine; you would have felt too that you were a friend of the gods, for was it not in your house that the immortals gave that noble old man at last, after his long years of misfortune, the greatest joy that can fall to the lot of any human being? and did they not take from you one friend only in order to replace him in the same moment, by another and a better? Come, I will hear no contradiction. Now for my request.

"You know that people sometimes call me an Athenian, sometimes a Halikarnassian.[90] Now, as the Ionian, Æolian and Dorian mercenaries have never been on good terms with the Karians, my almost triple descent (if I may call it so) has proved very useful to me as commander of both these divisions. Well qualified as Aristomachus may be for the command, yet in this one point Amasis will miss me; for I found it an easy matter to settle the differences among the troops and keep them at peace, while he, as a Spartan, will find it very difficult to keep right with the Karian soldiers.

90, Halikarnassus, a town on the south-west coast of Asia Minor, now called Bodru, was a Dorian colony planted in the Karian territory. The ruins of the famous sepulchre of King Mausolos (Mausoleum) which was erected here, have been found, and the excavations begun in 1856 under the direction of Newton and Pullans brought to light these superb productions of Grecian art, which with the sculptures of the Parthenon, are now the most beautiful ornament of the British Museum. Herodotus, himself a Halikarnassian, calls Phanes a native of the same place. Herod. I. 63. 64. We have made him an Athenian in order to give our readers an idea of an Attic noble. For this we have been blamed, perhaps justly, by the learned Dutch Professor Veth in his first-rate critique on this book; and in our second edition we should have made a Halikarnassian of Phanes entirely, had it not been so important to our story to represent an Ionian Greek in active life.

"This double nationality of mine arises from the fact that my father married a Halikarnassian wife out of a noble Dorian family, and, at the time of my birth, was staying with her in Halikarnassus, having come thither in order to take possession of her parental inheritance. So, though I was taken back to Athens before I was three months old, I must still be called a Karian, as a man's native land is decided by his birthplace.

"In Athens, as a young nobleman, belonging to that most aristocratic and ancient family, the Philaidæ, I was reared and educated in all the pride of an Attic noble. Pisistratus, brave and clever, and though of equal, yet by no means of higher birth, than ourselves, for there exists no family more aristocratic than my father's, gained possession of the supreme authority. Twice, the nobles, by uniting all their strength, succeeded in overthrowing him, and when, the third time, assisted by Lygdamis of Naxos, the Argives and Eretrians, he attempted to return, we opposed him again. We had encamped by the temple of Minerva at Pallene, and were engaged in sacrificing to the goddess, early, before our first meal, when we were suddenly surprised by the clever tyrant, who gained an easy, bloodless victory over our unarmed troops. As half of the entire army opposed to the tyrant was under my command, I determined rather to die than yield, fought with my whole strength, implored the soldiers to remain steadfast, resisted without yielding a point, but fell at last with a spear in my shoulder.

"The Pisistratidæ became lords of Athens.[91] I fled to Halikarnassus, my second home, accompanied by my wife and children. There, my name being known

91. Thucyd. VI. 56. 57.

through some daring military exploits, and, through my having once conquered in the Pythian games,[92] I was appointed to a command in the mercenary troops of the King of Egypt; accompanied the expedition to Cyprus, shared with Aristomachus the renown of having conquered the birthplace of Aphrodite for Amasis, and finally was named commander-in-chief of all the mercenaries in Egypt.

"Last summer my wife died; our children, a boy of eleven and a girl of ten years, remained with an aunt in Halikarnassus. But she too has followed to the inexorable Hades, and so, only a few days ago I sent for the little ones here. They cannot, however, possibly reach Naukratis in less than three weeks, and yet they will already have set out on their journey before a letter to countermand my first order could reach them.

"I must leave Egypt in fourteen days, and cannot therefore receive them myself.

"My own intentions are to go to the Thracian Chersonese, where my uncle, as you know, has been called to fill a high office among the Dolonki.[93] The children shall follow me thither; my faithful old slave Korax will remain in Naukratis on purpose to bring them to me.

"Now, if you will show to me that you are in deed and truth my friend, will you receive the little ones and take care of them till the next ship sails for Thrace? But above all, will you carefully conceal them from the

92. The Pythian games were solemnized every fourth year, near Delphi, in honor of Apollo the Python slayer. They fell in the 3rd year of each Olympiad.

93. Herod. VI. 35. 36. Laërt. Diog. I. 47. Miltiades, having entertained in his house, on their way to Delphi, the messengers sent by the Dolonki, a Thracian tribe at feud with their neighbors, was chosen to be their prince.

eyes of the crown-prince's spies? You know that Psamtik hates me mortally, and he could easily revenge himself on the father through the children. I ask you for this great favor, first, because I know your kindness by experience; and secondly, because your house has been made secure by the king's letter of guarantee, and they will therefore be safe here from the inquiries of the police; notwithstanding that, by the laws of this most formal country, all strangers, children not excepted, must give up their names to the officer of the district.

"You can now judge of the depth of my esteem, Rhodopis; I am committing into your hands all that makes life precious to me; for even my native land has ceased to be dear while she submits so ignominiously to her tyrants. Will you then restore tranquillity to an anxious father's heart, will you—?"

"I will, Phanes, I will!" cried the aged woman in undisguised delight. "You are not asking me for anything, you are presenting me with a gift. Oh, how I look forward already to their arrival! And how glad Sappho will be, when the little creatures come and enliven her solitude! But this I can assure you, Phanes, I shall not let my little guests depart with the first Thracian ship. You can surely afford to be separated from them one short half-year longer, and I promise you they shall receive the best lessons, and be guided to all that is good and beautiful."

"On that head I have no fear," answered Phanes, with a thankful smile. "But still you must send off the two little plagues by the first ship; my anxiety as to Psamtik's revenge is only too well grounded. Take my most heartfelt thanks beforehand for all the love and

kindness which you will show to my children. I too hope and believe, that the merry little creatures will be an amusement and pleasure to Sappho in her lonely life."

"And more," interrupted Rhodopis looking down; "this proof of confidence repays a thousand-fold the disgrace inflicted on me last night in a moment of intoxication.—But here comes Sappho!"

CHAPTER IV.

Five days after the evening we have just described at Rhodopis' house, an immense multitude was to be seen assembled at the harbor of Sais.

Egyptians of both sexes, and of every age and class were thronging to the water's edge.

Soldiers and merchants, whose various ranks in society were betokened by the length of their white garments, bordered with colored fringes, were interspersed among the crowd of half-naked, sinewy men, whose only clothing consisted of an apron, the costume of the lower classes. Naked children crowded, pushed and fought to get the best places. Mothers in short cloaks[94] were holding their little ones up to see the sight, which by this means they entirely lost themselves; and a troop of dogs and cats were playing and fighting at the feet of these eager sight-seers, who took the greatest pains not to tread on, or in any way injure the sacred animals.

94. According to various pictures on the Egyptian monuments. The mothers are from Wilkinson III. 363. Isis and Hathor, with the child Horus in her lap or at her breast, are found in a thousand representations, dating both from more modern times and in the Greek style. The latter seem to have served as a model for the earliest pictures of the Madonna holding the infant Christ.

The police kept order among this huge crowd with long staves,[95] on the metal heads of which the king's name was inscribed. Their care was especially needed to prevent any of the people from being pushed into the swollen Nile, an arm of which, in the season of the inundations, washes the walls of Sais.

On the broad flight of steps which led between two rows of sphinxes down to the landing-place of the royal boats, was a very different kind of assembly.

The priests of the highest rank were seated there on stone benches. Many wore long, white robes, others were clad in aprons, broad jewelled collars, and garments of panther skins. Some had fillets adorned with plumes that waved around brows, temples, and the stiff structures of false curls that floated over their shoulders; others displayed the glistening bareness of their smoothly-shaven skulls. The supreme judge was distinguished by the possession of the longest and handsomest plume in his head-dress, and a costly sapphire amulet, which, suspended by a gold chain,[96] hung on his breast.

The highest officers of the Egyptian army wore uniforms of gay colors,[97] and carried short swords in

95. Wilkinson III. 386. These sticks, in Mr. Salt's collection, were found at Thebes and are made of cherry-tree wood, a fact worthy of note, because no trees of this species are cultivated in Egypt at the present day. Egyptians bearing staves are to be seen on nearly all the monuments, and Egyptian staves are preserved in most museums. Chabas has devoted a special treatise to them.

96. This amulet bore a representation of *t-Ma*, the goddess of truth, wearing an ostrich-feather on her head. She is also represented with closed eyes. See Wilkinson II. 28. and VI. Pl. 49. Ælian mentions this amulet as an effigy in sapphire-stone, ἄγαλμα σαφείρου λίθου. Diodorus speaks of it as set with precious stones. The entire priesthood or order of the Pterophoræ wore the ostrich-feather; and many high priestly orders wore feathers on the head. See the edict of Kanopus. line 5 of the Greek text, and Clemens Alex. *Strom. ed. Potter. p.* 767. *and* 68, (VI. 4.) Wilkinson I. 1. Ebers, *Aegypten.* I. *p.* 343.

97. Wilkinson III, *Pl.* 3. Rosellini, *Mon. stor.* I. 79. *Mon. civ.* Pl. 121.

their girdles. On the right side of the steps a division of the body-guard was stationed, armed with battle-axes, daggers, bows, and large shields; on the left, were the Greek mercenaries, armed in Ionian fashion. Their new leader, our friend Aristomachus, stood with a few of his own officers apart from the Egyptians, by the colossal statues of Psamtik I., which had been erected on the space above the steps, their faces towards the river.

In front of these statues, on a silver chair, sat Psamtik, the heir to the throne. He wore a close-fitting garment of many colors, interwoven with gold,[98] and was surrounded by the most distinguished among the king's courtiers, chamberlains, counsellors, and friends, all bearing staves with ostrich feathers and lotus-flowers.[99]

The multitude gave vent to their impatience by shouting, singing, and quarrelling; but the priests and magnates on the steps preserved a dignified and solemn silence. Each, with his steady, unmoved gaze, his stiffly-curled false wig and beard,[100] and his solemn, deliberate manner, resembled the two huge statues, which, the one precisely similar to the other, stood also motionless in their respective places, gazing calmly into the stream.

At last silken sails, chequered with purple and blue, appeared in sight.[101]

98. Rosellini, *Mon. stor.* I. *Plate* 81.

99. In nearly every case where the Pharaoh appears, he is accompanied by men with such staves in their hands. "Fan-bearer" was a usual title among those in office about the court.

100. In the Berlin Museum a similar wig is still to be seen, the curls of which are 2 ft. 6 in. long. This mode probably owed its origin to the religious ordinance which prescribed shorn hair. Modern Oriental nations use the turban to protect their shaven heads from the sun's rays and the sudden chill of the evening air—the Egyptians wore wigs for the same purpose.

101. Wilkinson III. p. 211. Pl. 16. Ezekiel 27. 7. "Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth

The crowd shouted with delight. Cries of, "They are coming! Here they are!" "Take care, or you'll tread on that kitten," "Nurse, hold the child higher that she may see something of the sight." "You are pushing me into the water, Sebak!" "Have a care Phœnician, the boys are throwing burs into your long beard." "Now, now, you Greek fellow, don't fancy that all Egypt belongs to you, because Amasis allows you to live on the shores of the sacred river!" "Shameless set, these Greeks, down with them!" shouted a priest, and the cry was at once echoed from many mouths. "Down with the eaters of swine's flesh and despisers of the gods!"[102]

From words they were proceeding to deeds, but the police were not to be trifled with, and by a vigorous use of their staves, the tumult was soon stilled. The large, gay sails, easily to be distinguished among the brown, white and blue ones of the smaller Nile-boats which swarmed around them, came nearer and nearer to the expectant throng. Then at last the crown-prince and the dignitaries arose from their seats. The royal

to be thy sail." Dümichen, *Flotte einer ägyptischen Königin.* The colored pictures were still more brilliant. Rosellini, *mon. civ.* Pl. 107. 108.

102. The Egyptians, like the Jews, were forbidden to eat swine's flesh. This prohibition is mentioned in the Ritual of the Dead, found in a grave in Abd-el-Qurnah, and also in other places. Porphyr. *de abstin.* IV. The swine was considered an especially unclean animal pertaining to Typhon (Egyptian, Set) as the boar to Ares, and swineherds were an especially despised race. Animals with bristles were only sacrificed at the feasts of Osiris and Eileithyia. Herod. I. 2. 47. It is probable that Moses borrowed his prohibition of swine's flesh from the Egyptian laws with regard to unclean animals. When we read of rich Egyptians boasting in the possession for example, of 1500 swine, (S. Brugsch, *Reise nach Aegypten p.* 223.) this must be taken in connection with the information from Herodotus, noticed above. The sacrifices of swine offered Eileithyia are seen in the pictures discovered in the rock tombs of Kab Kunde.

band of trumpeters[103] blew a shrill and piercing blast of welcome, and the first of the expected boats stopped at the landing-place.

It was a rather long, richly-gilded vessel, and bore a silver sparrow-hawk as figure-head. In its midst rose a golden canopy with a purple covering, beneath which cushions were conveniently arranged. On each deck in the forepart of the ship sat twelve rowers, their aprons attached by costly fastenings.[104]

Beneath the canopy lay six fine-looking men in glorious apparel; and before the ship had touched the shore the youngest of these, a beautiful fair-haired youth, sprang on to the steps.

Many an Egyptian girl's mouth uttered a lengthened "Ah" at this glorious sight, and even the grave faces of some of the dignitaries brightened into a friendly smile.

The name of this much-admired youth was Bartja.[105] He was the son of the late, and brother of the reigning king of Persia, and had been endowed by nature with every gift that a youth of twenty years could desire for himself.

103. *Trumpeters.* Wilkinson I. 290. Pl. 13. Dümichen, *Flotte einer ägyptischen Königin. Taf.* 8. *and* 10.

104. Splendid Nile-boats were possessed, in greater or less numbers, by all the men of high rank. Even in the tomb of Ti at Sakkara, which dates from the time of the Pyramids, we meet with a chief overseer of the vessels belonging to a wealthy Egyptian. See note 101.

105. This Bartja is better known under the name of Smerdis, but on what account the Grecks gave him this name is not clear. In the cuneiform inscriptions of Bisitun or Behistân, he is called Bartja, or, according to Spiegel, *altpersische Inschriften p.* 5. X, Bardiya. We have chosen, for the sake of the easy pronunciation, the former, which is Rawlinson's simplified reading of the name. *Note of the Behistun inscription. Journ. of the Asiat. Soc.* The son of Amasis we have named Psamtik after the titles at Karnak and in the island of Philæ; the Greeks called him Psammetichos, Psamenitos and also Psammecherites a name in which Unger, *Chronologie des Manetho p.* 284 conjectures a metathesis of Psemtek (Psamtik) Ra.

Around his tiara was wound a blue and white turban, beneath which hung fair, golden curls of beautiful, abundant hair; his blue eyes sparkled with life and joy, kindness and high spirits, almost with sauciness; his noble features, around which the down of a manly beard was already visible, were worthy of a Grecian sculptor's chisel, and his slender but muscular figure told of strength and activity. The splendor of his apparel was proportioned to his personal beauty. A brilliant star of diamonds and turquoises glittered in the front of his tiara. An upper garment of rich white and gold brocade reaching just below the knees, was fastened round the waist with a girdle of blue and white, the royal colors of Persia. In this girdle gleamed a short, golden sword, its hilt and scabbard thickly studded with opals and sky-blue turquoises. The trousers were of the same rich material as the robe, fitting closely at the ankle, and ending within a pair of short boots of light-blue leather.

The long, wide sleeves of his robe displayed a pair of vigorous arms, adorned with many costly bracelets of gold and jewels; round his slender neck and on his broad chest lay a golden chain.[106]

Such was the youth who first sprang on shore. He was followed by Darius, the son of Hystaspes, a young Persian of the blood royal, similar in person to Bartja,

106. Curtius III. 3. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 3. 7. *Book of* Esther I. 6. VIII. 15. Æschylus, *Persians* 661. *Sculptures of Persepolis in Niebuhr and others.* The rest from the beautiful colored print (in Overbeck's *Pompeii, p.* 541.) of the famous mosaic floor, representing Darius conquered by Alexander (Battle of Issus) found in the casa del Fauno at Pompeii, and now in the Museo Borbonico, Naples. It was probably executed by Helen, daughter of Timon of Egypt. See Welcker's *kleine Schriften* III. p. 460. 475. and Gervinus, *k. hist. Schriften* VII. p. 435. 487. Schneider's opinion that this picture treats of the battle of Clastidium does not seem to me justified.

and scarcely less gorgeously apparelled than he. The third to disembark was an aged man with snow-white hair, in whose face the gentle and kind expression of childhood was united, with the intellect of a man, and the experience of old age. His dress consisted of a long purple robe with sleeves, and the yellow boots worn by the Lydians;[107] his whole appearance produced an impression of the greatest modesty and a total absence of pretension. Yet this simple old man had been, but a few years before, the most envied of his race and age; and even in our day at two thousand years' interval, his name is used as a synonyme for the highest point of worldly riches attainable by mankind. The old man to whom we are now introduced is no other than Crœsus, the dethroned king of Lydia, who was then living at the court of Cambyses, as his friend and counsellor, and had accompanied the young Bartja to Egypt, in the capacity of Mentor.

Crœsus was followed by Prexaspes, the king's Ambassador, Zopyrus, the son of Megabyzus, a Persian noble, the friend of Bartja and Darius; and, lastly, by his own son, the slender, pale Gyges, who after having become dumb in his fourth year through the fearful anguish he had suffered on his father's account at the taking of Sardis, had now recovered the power of speech.[108]

Psamtik descended the steps to welcome the strangers. His austere, sallow face endeavored to assume a smile. The high officials in his train bowed down nearly to the ground, allowing their arms to hang

107. On account of these boots, which are constantly mentioned, Crœsus was named by the oracle "soft-footed," "Ανδὲ ποδαβρέ," Herod. I. 55.

108. Herod. I. 85.

loosely at their sides. The Persians, crossing their hands on their breasts, cast themselves on the earth before the heir to the Egyptian throne. When the first formalities were over, Bartja, according to the custom of his native country, but greatly to the astonishment of the populace, who were totally unaccustomed to such a sight, kissed the sallow cheek of the Egyptian prince; who shuddered at the touch of a stranger's unclean lips, then took his way to the litters waiting to convey him and his escort to the dwelling designed for them by the king, in the palace at Sais.

A portion of the crowd streamed after the strangers, but the larger number remained at their places, knowing that many a new and wonderful sight yet awaited them.

"Are you going to run after those dressed-up monkeys and children of Typhon, too?"* asked an angry priest of his neighbor, a respectable tailor of Sais. "I tell you, Puhor, and the high-priest says so too, that these strangers can bring no good to the black land! I am for the good old times, when no one who cared for his life dared set foot on Egyptian soil. Now our streets are literally swarming with cheating Hebrews,[109] and above all with those insolent Greeks whom may the gods destroy! Only look, there is the third boat full of strangers! And do you know what kind of people these Persians are? The high-priest says that in the whole of their kingdom, which is as large as half the world, there is not a single temple to the gods; and that

109. The Jews were called Hebrews (Apuriu) by the Egyptians; as brought to light by Chabas. See Ebers, *Aegypten* I. p. 316. H. Brugsch opposes this opinion.

* See note 147.

instead of giving decent burial to the dead, they leave them to be torn in pieces by dogs and vultures."[110]

The tailor's indignation at hearing this was even greater than his astonishment, and pointing to the landing-steps, he cried:

"It is really too bad; see, there is the sixth boat full of these foreigners!"

"Yes, it is hard indeed!" sighed the priest, "one might fancy a whole army arriving. Amasis will go on in this manner until the strangers drive him from his throne and country, and plunder and make slaves of us poor creatures, as the evil Hyksos, those scourges of Egypt,[111] and the black Ethiopians did, in the days of old."

110. These statements are correct, as the Persians, at the time of the dynasty of the Achæmenidæ, had no temples, but used fire-altars and exposed their dead to the dogs and vultures. An impure corpse was not permitted to defile the pure earth by its decay; nor might it be committed to the fire or water for destruction, as their purity would be equally polluted by such an act. But as it was impossible to cause the dead bodies to vanish, Dakhmas or burying-places were laid out, which had to be covered with pavement and cement not less than four inches thick, and surrounded by cords to denote that the whole structure was as it were suspended in the air, and did not come in contact with the pure earth. Spiegel, *Avesta* II. *Einleitung.* 2. *Cap. nach Anquetil.* Picture of the Dakhma. *Vol.* II. *Tafel* I.

111. Foreign rulers over Egypt, whose descent it is difficult to determine, were called Hyksos. We have proof of their existence, not only in Manetho, but from highly interesting monuments, discovered principally at Tanis in the Delta. These, coming from the hand of Egyptian artists, represent the features of foreign rulers devoted to the worship of Set (Typhon). A Papyrus document, (Sallier I.) has also been preserved, which tells of the last days of this foreign supremacy; and a description of the storming of their fortress Abaris from sea and land is to be found in the tomb of the naval commander, Ahmes. Some of the names of these Hyksos kings have been preserved through the Turin Papyrus of the kings, and the Stela with the era of 400 years found at Tanis; a small lion discovered at Bagdad and other monuments, refer also to the Hyksos epoch. The last kings of the 17th dynasty, (the lawful rulers of Egypt had been driven southward) entered on a war with the alien rulers; and in the beginning of the 18th dynasty we find the whole kingdom under one sceptre. We believe these Hyksos to have been the over-powerful Phœnician colony in the

"The seventh boat!" shouted the tailor.

"May my protectress Neith, the great goddess of Sais, destroy me, if I can understand the king," complained the priest. "He sent three barks to Naukratis, that poisonous nest hated of the gods, to fetch the servants and baggage of these Persians; but instead of three, eight had to be procured, for these despisers of the gods and profaners of dead bodies have not only brought kitchen utensils, dogs, horses, carriages, chests, baskets and bales, but have dragged with them, thousands of miles, a whole host of servants. They tell me that some of them have no other work than twining of garlands and preparing ointments.[112] Their priests too, whom they call Magi, are here with them. I should like to know what they are for? of what use is a priest where there is no temple?"

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north of the Delta, joined by Arabians and some of the tribes from Palestine. They ruled for more than 400 years; and their expulsion may be fixed about 1600 B. C. They must, in no case, as has often been done since Fl. Josephus, be confounded with the Jews. For further particulars see Ebers, *Aegypten und die Bücher Moses* p. 198 and following. We also refer the reader (though we do not in all points agree with his conclusions) to Chabas' interesting work: *Les pasteurs en Egypte. Amsterdam* 1868. Brugsch, *Geschichte Asgyptens unter den Pharaonen, p.* 212. During the last thousand years before Christ the Ethiopians prevailed in Egypt, under 3 rulers; the last of whom Taharka, (Tirhaka) was expelled in 693. The priest-king of Upper Egypt, Pianchi, who had to encounter a severe resistance from the little dynasties in the Delta, was an Ethiopian, see the Stela of Pianchi. E. de Rougé, *Rev. archéol. n. s.* VIII. *p.* 96. Lauth, *Die Pianchistele, Abhandlung d. k. bayer. Akad. d. W.* I. Kl. XII. Bd. I. *Abtheilung.* Oppert, *Mémoire sur les Rapports de l'Egypte et de l'Assyrie.* The appellation, "scourges of mankind," which the Egyptian here applies to the Hyksos, was in fact the name of detraction applied to these interlopers; in Egyptian *aat-u.* Chabas has explained this in the *Mélanges égyptol.* I. 263.

112. Herod. VII. 83. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 10. *Anab.* VI. 4. In the train of Darius taken captive by Alexander, there were, according to Athenæus, 227 men-cooks, 29 kitchen-boys, 17 coopers, 70 butlers, 40 preparers of ointments, and 66 wreathers of garlands.

The old King Amasis received the Persian embassy shortly after their arrival with all the amiability and kindness peculiar to him.

Four days later, after having attended to the affairs of state, a duty punctually fulfilled by him every morning without exception, he went forth to walk with Crœsus in the royal gardens. The remaining members of the embassy, accompanied by the crown-prince, were engaged in an excursion up the Nile to the city of Memphis.

The palace-gardens, of a royal magnificence, yet similar in their arrangement to those of Rhodopis, lay in the north-west part of Sais, near the royal citadel.

Here, under the shadow of a spreading plane-tree, and near a gigantic basin of red granite, into which an abundance of clear water flowed perpetually through the jaws of black basalt crocodiles, the two old men seated themselves.

The dethroned king, though in reality some years the elder of the two, looked far fresher and more vigorous than the powerful monarch at his side. Amasis was tall, but his neck was bent; his corpulent body was supported by weak and slender legs: and his face, though well-formed, was lined and furrowed. But a vigorous spirit sparkled in the small, flashing eyes, and an expression of raillery, sly banter, and at times, even of irony, played around his remarkably full lips. The low, broad brow, the large and beautifully-arched head bespoke great mental power,[113] and in the changing color of his eyes one seemed to read that neither wit nor pas-

113 In Rosellini, *Mon. stor. Pl.* XIII. 53. also in Lepsius' *Denkmäler werk* is the portrait of Amasis as a youth. The features lead one to suppose that Herodotus has given the characteristics of this prince correctly.

sion were wanting in the man, who, from his simple place as soldier in the ranks, had worked his way up to the throne of the Pharaohs. His voice was sharp and hard, and his movements, in comparison with the deliberation of the other members of the Egyptian court, appeared almost morbidly active.

The attitude and bearing of his neighbor Crœsus were graceful, and in every way worthy of a king. His whole manner showed that he had lived in frequent intercourse with the highest and noblest minds of Greece. Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes of Miletus, Bias of Priene,[114] Solon of Athens, Pittakus of Lesbos, the most celebrated Hellenic philosophers, had in former and happier days been guests at the court of Crœsus in Sardis. His full clear voice sounded like pure song when compared with the shrill tones of Amasis.

"Now tell me openly," began king Pharaoh* in tolerably fluent Greek, "what opinion hast thou formed of Egypt? Thy judgment possesses for me more worth than that of any other man, for three reasons: thou art better acquainted with most of the countries and nations of this earth; the gods have not only allowed thee to ascend the ladder of fortune to its utmost summit, but also to descend it; and thirdly, thou hast long been the first counsellor to the mightiest of kings. Would that my kingdom might please thee so well that thou wouldst remain here and become to me a brother. Verily,

114. See notes 32 and 15. Bias, a philosopher of Ionian origin, flourished about 560 B. C. and was especially celebrated for his wise maxims on morals and law. After his death, which took place during his defence of a friend in the public court, a temple was erected to him by his countrymen. Laërt. Diog. I. 88.

* In English "great house," the high gate or "sublime porte." Egyptian peraa. See *Ebers, Aegypten und die Bücher Moses, I. p.* 263.

Crœsus, my friend hast thou long been, though my eyes beheld thee yesterday for the first time!"

"And thou mine," interrupted the Lydian. "I admire the courage with which thou hast accomplished that which seemed right and good in thine eyes, in spite of opposition near and around thee. I am thankful for the favor shown to the Hellenes, my friends, and I regard thee as related to me by fortune, for hast thou not also passed through all the extremes of good and evil that this life can offer?"

"With this difference," said Amasis smiling, "that we started from opposite points; in thy lot the good came first, the evil later; whereas in my own this order has been reversed. In saying this, however," he added, "I am supposing that my present fortune is a good for me, and that I enjoy it."

"And I, in that case," answered Crœsus, "must be assuming that I am unhappy in what men call my present ill-fortune."

"How can it possibly be otherwise after the loss of such enormous possessions?"

"Does happiness consist then in possession?" asked Crœsus. "Is happiness itself a thing to be possessed? Nay, by no means! It is nothing but a feeling, a sensation, which the envious gods vouchsafe more often to the needy than to the mighty. The clear sight of the latter becomes dazzled by the glittering treasure, and they cannot but suffer continual humiliation, because, conscious of possessing power to obtain *much*, they wage an eager war for *all*, and therein are continually defeated."

Amasis sighed, and answered: "I would I could prove thee in the wrong; but in looking back on my

past life I am fain to confess that its cares began with that very hour which brought me what men call my good fortune." "And I," interrupted Crœsus, "can assure thee that I am thankful thou delayedst to come to my help, inasmuch as the hour of my overthrow was the beginning of true, unsullied happiness. When I beheld the first Persians scale the walls of Sardis, I execrated myself and the gods, life appeared odious to me, existence a curse. Fighting on, but in heart despairing, I and my people were forced to yield. A Persian raised his sword to cleave my skull—in an instant my poor dumb son had thrown himself between his father and the murderer, and for the first time after long years of silence, I heard him speak. Terror had loosened his tongue; in that dreadful hour Gyges learnt once more to speak, and I, who but the moment before had been cursing the gods, bowed down before their power. I had commanded a slave to kill me the moment I should be taken prisoner by the Persians, but now I deprived him of his sword. I was a changed man, and by degrees learnt ever more and more to subdue the rage and indignation which yet from time to time would boil up again within my soul, rebellious against my fate and my noble enemies. Thou knowest that at last I became the friend of Cyrus, and that my son grew up at his court, a free man at my side, having entirely regained the use of his speech. Everything beautiful and good that I had heard, seen or thought during my long life I treasured up now for him; he was my kingdom, my crown, my treasure. Cyrus's days of care, his nights so reft of sleep, reminded me with horror of my own former greatness, and from day to day it became more evident to me that happiness has nothing to do with

our outward circumstances. Each man possesses the hidden germ in his own heart. A contented, patient mind, rejoicing much in all that is great and beautiful and yet despising not the day of small things; bearing sorrow without a murmur and sweetening it by calling to remembrance former joy; moderation in all things; a firm trust in the favor of the gods and a conviction that, all things being subject to change, so with us too the worst must pass in due season; all this helps to mature the germ of happiness, and gives us power to smile, where the man undisciplined by fate might yield to despair and fear."

Amasis listened attentively, drawing figures the while in the sand with the golden flower on his staff. At last he spoke:

"Verily, Crœsus, I 'the great god,' the 'sun of righteousness,' 'the son of Neith,' 'the lord of warlike glory,' as the Egyptians call me,[115] am tempted to envy thee, dethroned and plundered as thou art. I have been as happy as thou art now. Once I was known through all Egypt, though only the poor son of a captain, for my light heart, happy temper, fun and high spirits.[116] The common soldiers would do anything for me, my superior officers could have found much fault, but in the mad Amasis, as they called me, all was overlooked, and among my equals, (the other under-officers) there could be no fun or merry-making unless I took a share in it. My predecessor king Hophra sent us

115. Amasis bore these titles. Rosellini, *Monumenti dell' Egitto.* II. 149. That all the Pharaohs had similar distinctive titles, and were honored as gods is proved by thousands of hieroglyphic inscriptions; also by the Rosetta inscription, and the Canopus edict. The title Neb pehti, "lord of warlike glory," is frequently to be found in the 26th dynasty.

116. See Herod. II. 172 and following. Diod. I. 95.

against Cyrene. Seized with thirst in the desert, we refused to go on; and a suspicion that the king intended to sacrifice us to the Greek mercenaries drove the army to open mutiny. In my usual joking manner I called out to my friends: 'You can never get on without a king, take me for your ruler; a merrier you will never find!' The soldiers caught the words. 'Amasis will be our king,' ran through the ranks from man to man, and, in a few hours more, they came to me with shouts, and acclamations of 'The good, jovial Amasis for our King!' One of my boon companions set a field-marshal's helmet on my head: I made the joke earnest, and we defeated Hophra at Momemphis. The people joined in the conspiracy, I ascended the throne, and men pronounced me fortunate. Up to that time I had been every Egyptian's friend, and now I was the enemy of the best men in the nation.

"The priests swore allegiance to me, and accepted me as a member of their caste, but only in the hope of guiding me at their will. My former superiors in command either envied me, or wished to remain on the same terms of intercourse as formerly. But this would have been inconsistent with my new position, and have undermined my authority. One day, therefore, when the officers of the host were at one of my banquets and attempting, as usual, to maintain their old convivial footing, I showed them the golden basin in which their feet had been washed before sitting down to meat; five days later, as they were again drinking at one of my revels, I caused a golden image of the great god Ra[117] to

117. Ra, with the masculine article Phra, must be regarded as the central point of the sun-worship of the Egyptians, which we consider to have been the foundation of their entire religion. He was more especially worshipped at Heliopolis, the Egyptian An. (Hebrew On).

be placed upon the richly-ornamented banqueting-table. On perceiving it, they fell down to worship. As they rose from their knees, I took the sceptre, and holding it up on high with much solemnity, exclaimed: 'In five days an artificer has transformed the despised vessel into which ye spat and in which men washed your feet, into this divine image. Such a vessel was I, but the Deity, which can fashion better and more quickly than a goldsmith, has made me your king. Bow down then before me and worship. He who henceforth refuses to obey, or is unmindful of the reverence due to the king, is guilty of death!'

"They fell down before me, every one, and I saved my authority, but lost my friends. As I now stood in need of some other prop, I fixed on the Hellenes,

He is generally represented in red on the monuments. His sacred animal was the sparrow-hawk, and a winged disc of the sun his symbol. In the Ritual of the dead he plays the most important part; and hymns and prayers were principally addressed to him. Plato, Eudoxus, and probably Pythagoras also, profited by the teaching of his priests. The obelisks, serving also as memorial monuments on which the names and deeds of great kings were recorded, were sacred to him, and Pliny remarks of them that they represented the rays of the sun. He was regarded as the god of light, the director of the entire visible creation, over which he reigned, as Osiris over the world of spirits. As, however, every earthly manifestation is only the veil before a spiritual one, Ra is in reality only the earthly manifestation of Osiris. Osiris is the "soul of Ra": he walks in this our world as Ra, returning every evening to the distant sphere in which he lives alone, and which is his true native land. He only changes his name and outward form of existence, governing as Osiris there, and as Ra in our world. Each morning he reproduces from himself the renovated Ra, as Horus Ra, and again enters on the same orbit. Lepsius, *älteste Texte des Todtenbuches*. The myth of Osiris, Isis and Horus lends an allegoric-dramatic form to these views. The Phœnix was also a part of the worship of Ra. Every 500 years it came from the land of palms (the eastern Phœnicia) to be consumed by fire in the temple of Heliopolis and to rise from its own ashes in new and greater beauty. It symbolized a period of 500 years, which, like the Phœnix, eternally reproduced itself, and, in its sixfold repetition, determined the time needed by the soul before it should go forth purified from its pilgrimage. Lepsius, *Chronologie* p. 180 and following.

knowing that in all military qualifications one Greek is worth more than five Egyptians, and that with this assistance I should be able to carry out those measures which I thought beneficial.

"I kept the Greek mercenaries always round me, I learnt their language, and it was they who brought to me the noblest human being I ever met, Pythagoras. I endeavored to introduce Greek art and manners among ourselves, seeing what folly lay in a self-willed adherence to that which has been handed down to us, when it is in itself bad and unworthy, while the good seed lay on our Egyptian soil, only waiting to be sown.

"I portioned out the whole land to suit my purposes,[118] appointed the best police in the world, and accomplished much; but my highest aim, namely: to infuse into this country, at once so gay and so gloomy, the spirit and intellect of the Greeks, their sense of beauty in form, their love of life and joy in it, this all was shivered on the same rock which threatens me with overthrow and ruin whenever I attempt to accomplish anything new. The priests are my opponents, my masters, they hang like a dead weight upon me. Clinging with superstitious awe to all that is old and traditionary, abominating everything foreign, and regarding every stranger as the natural enemy of their authority and their teaching, they can lead the most devout and religious of all nations with a power that has scarcely any limits. For this I am forced to sacrifice all my plans, for this I see my life passing away in bondage to their severe ordinances, this will rob my death-bed of peace, and I cannot be secure that this host of proud

118. Herod. II. 177. Diod. I. 95.

mediators between god and man will allow me to rest even in my grave!"

"By Zeus our saviour, with all thy good fortune, thou art to be pitied!" interrupted Crœsus sympathetically, "I understand thy misery; for though I have met with many an individual who passed through life darkly and gloomily, I could not have believed that an entire race of human beings existed, to whom a gloomy, sullen heart was as natural as a poisonous tooth to the serpent. Yet it is true, that on my journey hither and during my residence at this court I have seen none but morose and gloomy countenances among the priesthood. Even the youths, thy immediate attendants, are never seen to smile; though cheerfulness, that sweet gift of the gods, usually belongs to the young, as flowers to spring."

"Thou errest," answered Amasis, "in believing this gloom to be a universal characteristic of the Egyptians. It is true that our religion requires much serious thought. There are few nations, however, who have so largely the gift of bantering fun and joke: or who on the occasion of a festival, can so entirely forget themselves and everything else but the enjoyments of the moment; but the very sight of a stranger is odious to the priests, and the moroseness which thou observest is intended as retaliation on me for my alliance with the strangers. Those very boys, of whom thou spakest,[119] are the greatest torment of my life. They perform for me the service of slaves, and obey my slightest nod. One might imagine that the parents who devote their children to this service, and who are the highest in rank among the priesthood, would be the most obedient and reverential servants of the king whom they profess to honor as

119. Diodor. I. 70.

divine; but believe me, Crœsus, just in this very act of devotion, which no ruler can refuse to accept without giving offence, lies the most crafty, scandalous calculation. Each of these youths is my keeper, my spy. They watch my smallest actions and report them at once to the priests."

"But how canst thou endure such an existence? Why not banish these spies and select servants from the military caste, for instance? They would be quite as useful as the priests."

"Ah! if I only could, if I dared!" exclaimed Amasis loudly. And then, as if frightened at his own rashness, he continued in a low voice, "I believe that even here I am being watched. To-morrow I will have that grove of fig-trees yonder uprooted. The young priest there, who seems so fond of gardening, has other fruit in his mind besides the half-ripe figs that he is so slowly dropping into his basket. While his hand is plucking the figs, his ear gathers the words that fall from the mouth of his king."

"But, by our father Zeus, and by Apollo——"

"Yes, I understand thy indignation and I share it; but every position has its duties, and as a king of a people who venerate tradition as the highest divinity, I must submit, at least in the main, to the ceremonies handed down through thousands of years. Were I to burst these fetters, I know positively that at my death my body would remain unburied; for, know that the priests sit in judgment over every corpse, and deprive the condemned of rest, even in the grave."[120]

120. This well-known custom among the ancient Egyptians is confirmed, not only by many Greek narrators, but by the laboriously erased inscriptions discovered in the chambers of some tombs. The religious views of the Egyptians will account for very great anxiety

"Why care about the grave?" cried Crœsus, becoming angry. "We live for life, not for death!"

"Say rather," answered Amasis rising from his seat, "we, with our Greek minds, believe a beautiful life to be the highest good. But Crœsus, I was begotten and nursed by Egyptian parents, nourished on Egyptian food, and though I have accepted much that is Greek, am still, in my innermost being, an Egyptian. What has been sung to us in our childhood, and praised as sacred in our youth, lingers on in the heart until the day which sees us embalmed as mummies. I am an old man and have but a short span yet to run, before I reach the landmark which separates us from that farther country. For the sake of life's few remaining days, shall I willingly mar Death's thousands of years? No, my friend, in this point at least I have remained an Egyptian, in believing, like the rest of my countrymen, that the happiness of a future life in the kingdom of Osiris[121] de-

lest the rest of the grave should be disturbed. It has been questioned whether the Greek narrators may not possibly have confounded the court of justice held over the dead here on earth with the judgment to come, to be held over the soul in the other world: but we see no especial justification for this view.

121. Each human soul was considered as a part of the world-soul Osiris, was united to him after the death of the body, and thenceforth took the name of Osiris. The Egyptian Cosmos consisted of the three great realms, the Heavens, the Earth and the Depths. Over the vast ocean which girdles the vault of heaven, the sun moves in a boat or car drawn by the planets and fixed stars. On this ocean too the great constellations circle in their ships, and there is the kingdom of the blissful gods, who sit enthroned above this heavenly ocean under a canopy of stars. The mouth of this great stream is in the East, where the sun-god rises from the mists and is born again as a child every morning. The surface of the earth is inhabited by human beings having a share in the three great cosmic kingdoms. They receive their soul from the heights of heaven, the seat and source of light; their material body is of the earth; and the appearance or outward form by which one human being is distinguished from another at sight—his phantom or shadow—belongs to the depths. At death, soul, body and shadow separate from one another. The soul to return to the place from whence it came, to Heaven, for it is a part of God (of Osiris); the

pends on the preservation of my body, the habitation of the soul. But enough of these matters; thou wilt find it difficult to enter into such thoughts. Tell me rather what thou thinkest of our temples and pyramids."

Crœsus, after reflecting a moment, answered with a smile: "Those huge pyramidal masses of stone seem to me creations of the boundless desert, the gaily painted temple colonnades to be the children of the Spring; but though the sphinxes lead up to your temple gates, and seem to point the way into the very shrines themselves, the sloping fortress-like walls of the Pylons, those huge isolated portals, appear as if placed there to repel entrance. Your many-colored hieroglyphics likewise attract the gaze, but baffle the inquiring spirit by the mystery that lies within their characters. The images of your manifold gods are everywhere to be seen; they crowd on our gaze, and yet who knows not that their real is not their apparent significance? that they are mere outward images of thoughts accessible only to the few, and, as I have heard, almost incomprehensi-

body, to be committed to the earth from which it was formed in the image of its creator; the phantom or shadow, to descend into the depths, the kingdom of shadows. The gate to this kingdom was placed in the West among the sunset hills, where the sun goes down daily,—where he dies. Thence arise the changeful and corresponding conceptions connected with rising and setting, arriving and departing, being born and dying. The careful preservation of the body after death from destruction, not only through the process of inward decay, but also through violence or accident, was in the religion of ancient Egypt a principal condition (perhaps introduced by the priests on sanitary grounds) on which depended the speedy deliverance of the soul, and with this her early, appointed union with the source of Light and Good, which two properties were, in idea, one and indivisible. In the Egyptian conceptions the soul was supposed to remain, in a certain sense, connected with the body during a long cycle of solar years. She could, however, quit the body from time to time at will, and could appear to mortals in various forms and places; these appearances differed according to the hour, and were prescribed in exact words and delineations, *From tombs and Papyri.* Brugsch, *Aegyptische Gräberwelt, P. 6.*

ble in their depth? My curiosity is excited everywhere, and my interest awakened, but my warm love of the beautiful feels itself in no way attracted. My intellect might strain to penetrate the secrets of your sages, but my heart and mind can never be at home in a creed which views life as a short pilgrimage to the grave, and death as the only true life!"

"And yet," said Amasis, "Death has for us too his terrors, and we do all in our power to evade his grasp. Our physicians would not be celebrated and esteemed as they are, if we did not believe that their skill could prolong our earthly existence. This reminds me of the oculist Nebenchari whom I sent to Susa, to the king. Does he maintain his reputation? is the king content with him?"

"Very much so," answered Crœsus. "He has been of use to many of the blind; but the king's mother is alas! still sightless. It was Nebenchari who first spoke to Cambyses of the charms of thy daughter Tachot. But we deplore that he understands diseases of the eye alone. When the Princess Atossa lay ill of fever, he was not to be induced to bestow a word of counsel."

"That is very natural; our physicians are only permitted to treat one part of the body. We have aurists, dentists and oculists, surgeons for fractures of the bone, and others for internal diseases. By the ancient priestly law a dentist is not allowed to treat a deaf man, nor a surgeon for broken bones a patient who is suffering from a disease of the bowels, even though he should have a first rate knowledge of internal complaints.[122]

122. Herod. II. 84. Börner, *Antiquitates medicinæ Aegyptiacæ*. p. 20. Spengel and Hirsch, *Geschichte der Medicin* and others. The great medical Papyrus Ebers found in Thebes throws an entirely new light on all these matters. This work, called by Clemens of Alexandria

This law aims at securing a great degree of real and thorough knowledge; an aim indeed, pursued by the priests (to whose caste the physicians belong) with a most praiseworthy earnestness in all branches of science. Yonder lies the house of the high-priest Neithotep, whose knowledge of astronomy and geometry was so highly praised, even by Pythagoras. It lies next to the porch leading into the temple of the goddess Neith, the protectress of Sais. Would I could show thee the sacred grove with its magnificent trees, the splendid pillars of the temple with capitals modelled from the lotus-flower,[123] and the colossal chapel which I caused to be wrought from a single piece of granite, as an offering to the goddess;[124] but alas! entrance is strictly refused to strangers by the priests. Come, let us seek my wife and daughter; they have conceived an affection

the hermetic book on remedies for the eye (*περὶ φαρηάκων*) prescribes medicines for all sorts of diseases. The whole is compiled from several authors, whose names are mentioned, yet it is attributed to the god Thoth (Hermes) whose inspired disciples composed it. It proves that Egyptian physicians possessed an immense number of remedies, that they understood how to observe, that prophylactic measures were not unknown to them, and though specialists were not lacking, the latter also possessed a knowledge of the other branches of Egyptian medicine, as is proved by corrections and marginal notes on our Papyrus "on the cure of all parts of the body," made by the same physician in various places, treating of the most different diseases.

123. The Egyptian columns were made in the form of plants. When the capitals were not adorned with masks of the gods as at Dendera, they were intentionally carved in the likeness of palms, lotus-flowers, or seed-capsules. Shafts representing a number of papyrus reeds are often to be found, for example in the temple at Luxor. See Lepsius *on the connection between ancient Egyptian and Doric columns. Ueber den Zusammenhang der altägyptischen, und dorischen Säule* Lepsius. *Sur l'ordre des colonnes piliers en Egypte, et ses rapports etc.* in the *Annales de l'institut de corresp. arch. Rome.* 1838. *Vol.* IX. and his new work on some forms of Egyptian Art, note. p. 26. Champollion has already inferred, that the entrance to the tombs of Benihassan might prove of great importance to the history of the origin of the forms of columns. *Lettres écr. d'Eg. et de Nubie.* p. 74 and following.

124. Herod. II. 175.

for thee, and indeed it is my wish that thou shouldst gain a friendly feeling towards this poor maiden before she goes forth with thee to the strange land, and to the strange nation whose princess she is to become. Wilt thou not adopt and take her under thy care?"

"On that thou may'st with fullest confidence rely," replied Crœsus with warmth, returning the pressure of Amasis' hand. "I will protect thy Nitetis as if I were her father; and she will need my help, for the apartments of the women in the Persian palaces are dangerous ground. But she will meet with great consideration. Cambyses may be contented with his choice, and will be highly gratified that thou hast entrusted him with thy fairest child. Nebenchari had only spoken of Tachot, thy second daughter."

"Nevertheless I will send my beautiful Nitetis. Tachot is so tender, that she could scarcely endure the fatigues of the journey and the pain of separation. Indeed were I to follow the dictates of my own heart, Nitetis should never leave us for Persia. But Egypt stands in need of peace, and I was a king before I became a father!"

CHAPTER V.

THE other members of the Persian embassy had returned to Sais from their excursion up the Nile to the pyramids. Prexaspes alone, the ambassador from Cambyses, had already set out for Persia, in order to inform the king of the successful issue of his suit.

The palace of Amasis was full of life and stir. The

huge building was filled in all parts by the followers of the embassy, nearly three hundred in number, and by the high guests themselves, to whom every possible attention was paid. The courts of the palace swarmed with guards and officials, with young priests and slaves, all in splendid festal raiment.

On this day it was the king's intention to make an especial display of the wealth and splendor of his court, at a festival arranged in honor of his daughter's betrothal.

The lofty reception-hall opening on to the gardens, with its ceiling sown with thousands of golden stars and supported by gaily-painted columns, presented a magic appearance. Lamps of colored papyrus hung against the walls and threw a strange light on the scene, something like that when the sun's rays strike through colored glass. The space between the columns and the walls was filled with choice plants, palms, oleanders, pomegranates, oranges and roses, behind which an invisible band of harp and flute-players was stationed, who received the guests with strains of monotonous, solemn music.[125]

The floor of this hall was paved in black and white, and in the middle stood elegant tables covered with

125. The description of this assembly is borrowed from the paintings on walls, which have been reproduced by Wilkinson, Rosellini, Lepsius and others in their large works. A picture copied by Düimichen in Egypt, but hitherto unpublished, and representing very graphically a private party in the time of the Pharaohs, interested me excessively. They were copied from the mortuary chapels, that is the first hall in the rock tombs of wealthy Egyptians. Here the relatives of the dead assembled to offer sacrifices to their manes. The paintings recalled to memory the life, honors, possessions, favorite pursuits, etc. of him who had gone to the other world. The favorite mode of representation was in the midst of his family. Such pictures are to be found near Minieh, el Kab, and very frequently in the tombs of Abd-el-Qurnah, belonging to the necropolis of Thebes.

dishes of all kinds, cold roast meats, sweets, well-arranged baskets of fruit and cake, golden jugs of wine, glass drinking-cups and artistic flower-vases.

A multitude of richly-dressed slaves under direction of the high-steward, busied themselves in handing these dishes to the guests, who, either standing around, or reclining on sumptuous seats, entertained themselves in conversation with their friends.

Both sexes and all ages were to be found in this assembly. As the women entered, they received charming little nosegays from the young priests in the personal service of the king, and many a youth of high degree appeared in the hall with flowers, which he not only offered to her he loved best, but held up for her to smell.

The Egyptian men, who were dressed as we have already seen them at the reception of the Persian embassy, behaved towards the women with a politeness that might almost be termed submissive. Among the latter few could pretend to remarkable beauty, though there were many bewitching almond-shaped eyes, whose loveliness was heightened by having their lids dyed with the eye-paint called "mestem." The majority wore their hair arranged in the same manner; the wealth of waving brown locks floated back over the shoulders and was brushed behind the ears, one braid being left on each side to hang over the temples to the breast. A broad diadem confined these locks, which as the maids knew, were quite as often the wig-maker's work as Nature's. Many ladies of the court wore above their foreheads a lotus-flower, whose stem drooped on the hair at the back.

They carried fans of bright feathers in their delicate

hands. These were loaded with rings; the finger-nails were stained red,[126] according to Egyptian custom, and gold or silver bands were worn above the elbow, and at the wrists and ankles.

Their robes were beautiful and costly, and in many cases so cut as to leave the right breast uncovered.

Bartja, the young Persian prince, among the men, and Nitetis, the Pharaoh's daughter, among the women, were equally conspicuous for their superior beauty, grace and charms. The royal maiden wore a transparent rose-colored robe, in her black hair were fresh roses, she walked by the side of her sister, the two robed alike, but Nitetis pale as the lotus-flower in her mother's hair.

Ladice, the queen,[127] by birth a Greek, and daughter of Battus of Cyrene, walked by the side of Amasis and presented the young Persians to her children. A light lace robe was thrown over her garment of purple, embroidered with gold; and on her beautiful Grecian head she wore the Uræus serpent, the ornament peculiar to Egyptian queens.[128]

126. This custom is still prevalent in the East; the plant Shenna, *Lausonia spinosa*, called by Pliny XIII. 1. Cyprus, being used for the purpose. The Egyptian government has prohibited the dye, but it will be difficult to uproot the ancient custom. The pigment for coloring the eyelids, mentioned in the text, is also still employed. The Papyrus Ébers alludes to the Arabian kohl or antimony, which is frequently mentioned under the name of "mestem" on monuments belonging to the time of the Pharaohs.

127. Herod. II. 181. The second consort of Amasis must, according to her cartouche, have been called Sebaste. This name may be Egyptian, or it may be Greek. If the former, she was a daughter of the goddess Bast; if the latter, it signifies "the highly-esteemed, the worshipped," and proves that she was, in fact, a native of Hellas.

128. The Uræus, the emblem of sovereignty, formed part of the head-dress of every Egyptian king or queen. A head-dress of silver, belonging to an Egyptian queen, with the head of this serpent, can be seen in the Museum at Leyden. Drawings in Champollion, *Mon.* Rosellini, *Mon. stor. and civil.*, Wilkinson, Lepsius and many others.

Her countenance was noble yet charming, and every movement betrayed the grace only to be imparted by a Greek education.

Amasis, in making choice of this queen, after the death of his second wife, (the Egyptian Tentcheta,[129] mother of Psamtik the heir to the throne,) had followed his prepossession in favor of the Greek nation and defied the wrath of the priests.

The two girls at Ladice's side, Tachot and Nitetis, were called twin-sisters, but showed no signs of that resemblance usually to be found in twins.

Tachot was a fair, blue-eyed girl,[130] small, and

129. The first consort of Amasis appears to have been Anchnas, the widow of Psamtik II. whom he probably married from political reasons, as she was already somewhat advanced in years. Lepsius, *Königsbuch* II. Pl. XXXVIII.

130. The Egyptian women were not exactly considered as beautiful among the ancients. Nevertheless, we find some very agreeable countenances among the portraits of queens and princesses given us by Rosellini and Lepsius. Among the sphinxes too we find heads which correspond entirely to our present ideas of beauty. Exquisite specimens of beautiful Egyptian faces were found in the excavations at Sakkara and copied in Mariette's Serapéum. Denon, speaking of the ancient pictures of Egyptian women says: "*Celle des femmes ressemble encore à la figure des jolies femmes d'aujourd'hui: de la rondeur, de la volupté, le nez petit, les yeux longs, peu ouverts. . . le caractère de tête de la plupart tenait du beau style.*" And General Heilbronner, in his excellent book of travels in Egypt, goes even farther when speaking of the heads of the women. It is placed beyond doubt, that the Egyptian nation was originally a wandering tribe, belonging to the so-called Caucasian race, which settled on the Nile. See Ebers *Aegypten u. d. Bücher Moses* I. 40 and following. Euripides speaks of beautiful maidens as dwelling on the shores of the Nile. It is also certain that there were fair-haired women among the Egyptians. In Syncellus' Manetho the queen Nitocris is called ξανθὴ τὴν χροιάν, that is to say fair-haired, and among the portraits given by Rosellini, *Mon. stor.* Pl. XIX. we have discovered a fair-haired princess who, in the text *Vol.* II. p. 510., is called Reninofre, daughter of Thotmes IV. It seems to us however that her cartouche must be read Ranofre, who, according to Lepsius, was a daughter of Thotmes III. Almost all the women represented on the monuments—even the most ancient ones, among which we must number the Mastaba of Medum—have a clear, light yellow complexion. The Coptic

delicately built; Nitetis, on the other hand, tall and majestic, with black hair and eyes, evinced in every action that she was of royal blood.

"How pale thou look'st, my child!" said Ladice, kissing Nitetis' cheek. "Be of good courage, and meet thy future bravely. Here is the noble Bartja, the brother of thy future husband."

Nitetis raised her dark, thoughtful eyes and fixed them long and enquiringly on the beautiful youth. He bowed low before the blushing maiden, kissed her garment, and said:

"I salute thee, as my future queen and sister! I can believe that thy heart is sore at parting from thy home, thy parents, brethren and sisters; but be of good courage; thy husband is a great hero, and a powerful king; our mother is the noblest of women, and among the Persians the beauty and virtue of woman is as much revered as the life-giving light of the sun. Of thee, thou sister of the lily Nitetis, whom, by her side I might venture to call the rose, I beg forgiveness, for robbing thee of thy dearest friend."

As he said these words he looked eagerly into Tachot's beautiful blue eyes; she bent low, pressing her hand upon her heart, and gazed on him long after Amasis had drawn him away to a seat immediately opposite the dancing-girls, who were just about to display their skill for the entertainment of the guests. A thin petticoat was the only clothing of these girls, who threw and wound their flexible limbs to a measure played on harp and tambourine. After the dance appeared

women, believed to be the direct descendants of the ancient Egyptians, are often very beautiful. See G. Richter's portrait of a pretty Coptic maiden in Ebers *Aegypten in Bild und Wort*. p. 33.

Egyptian singers and buffoons[131] for the further amusement of the company.

At length some of the courtiers forsook the hall, their grave demeanor being somewhat overcome by intoxication.[132] The women were carried home in gay litters by slaves with torches; and only the highest military commanders, the Persian ambassadors and a few officials, especial friends of Amasis, remained behind. These were retained by the master of the ceremonies, and conducted to a richly-ornamented saloon, where a gigantic wine-bowl standing on a table adorned in the Greek fashion, invited to a drinking-bout.

131. Dancing-girls, who accompanied themselves on the guitar. Wilkinson II. 301. Players on the harp. Wilkinson II. 20. Harpists and blind singers II. 239. Women with tambourines II. 240. Men playing on the double flute II. 232 and 234. Entertainment with dancing-girls and musicians. Wilkinson II. *Pl.* XII. II. 390. Jugglers. Wilkinson II. 433. Musical instruments are to be found in the museums. The dancing-girls whom we see singing at the same time, may be compared to the Almehs of the present day, who enliven the entertainments of the modern Cairenes and the inhabitants of other towns on the Nile, by their charms, their singing and dancing. In ancient Egypt they were called Achennu, and seem to have formed a part of the establishments of the great lords. Private singers were kept in aristocratic households. One employed by Neferhotep, a noble of the 18th dynasty, was found in his tomb at Abd-el-Qurnah. By his side may be read one of his songs, which is rich in beautiful passages.

132. Unfortunately women, as well as men, are to be seen depicted on the monuments in an intoxicated condition. One man is being carried home, like a log of wood, on the heads of his servants. Wilkinson II. 168. Another is standing on his head II. 169. and several ladies are in the act of returning the excessive quantity which they have drunk. Wilkinson II. 167. At the great Techu-festival at Dendera intoxication seems to have been as much commanded as at the festivals of Dionysus under the Ptolemies, one of whom (Ptolemy Dionysus) threatened those who remained sober with the punishment of death. But intoxication was in general looked upon by the Egyptians as a forbidden and despicable vice. In the Papyrus *Anastasi* IV., for instance, we read these words on a drunkard: "Thou art as a sanctuary without a divinity, as a house without bread," and further: "How carefully should men avoid beer (hek)." A number of passages in the Papyrus denounce drunkards.

Amasis was seated on a high arm-chair[133] at the head of the table; at his left the youthful Bartja, at his right the aged Crœsus. Besides these and the other Persians, Theodorus and Ibykus, the friends of Polykrates, already known to us, and Aristomachus, now commander of the Greek body-guard, were among the king's guests.

Amasis, whom we have just heard in such grave discourse with Crœsus, now indulged in jest and satire. He seemed once more the wild officer, the bold reveller of the olden days.

His sparkling, clever jokes, at times playful, at times scornful, flew round among the revellers. The guests responded in loud, perhaps often artificial laughter, to their king's jokes, goblet after goblet was emptied, and the rejoicings had reached their highest point, when suddenly the master of the ceremonies appeared, bearing a small gilded mummy; and displaying it to the gaze of the assembly, exclaimed. "Drink, jest, and be merry, for all too soon ye shall become like unto this!"[134]

"Is it your custom thus to introduce death at all your banquets?" said Bartja, becoming serious, "or is this only a jest devised for to-day by your master of the ceremonies?"

133. Royal arm-chairs, expensively gilt and cushioned in gay colors. Wilkinson II. *Pl.* XI. Rosellini, *mon. civ. Pl.* 90–92.

134. Herod. II. 78. Petron. *Satyr. c.* 34. Nicol. Damasc. *Orat.* I. Wilkinson gives drawings of these mummies (II. 410.) hundreds of which were placed in the tombs, and have been preserved to us. Lucian was present at a banquet, when they were handed round. The Greeks seem to have adopted this custom, but with their usual talent for beautifying all they touched, substituted a winged figure of death for the mummy. Maxims similar to the following one are by no means rare. "Cast off all care; be mindful only of pleasure until the day cometh when thou must depart on the journey, whose goal is the realm of silence!" Copied from the tomb of Neferhotep in Abd-el-Qurnah.

"Since the earliest ages," answered Amasis, "it has been our custom to display these mummies at banquets, in order to increase the mirth of the revellers, by reminding them that one must enjoy the time while it is here. Thou, young butterfly, hast still many a long and joyful year before thee; but we, Crœsus, we old men, must hold by this firmly. Fill the goblets, cup-bearer, let not one moment of our lives be wasted! Thou canst drink well, thou golden-haired Persian! Truly the great gods have endowed thee not only with beautiful eyes, and blooming beauty, but with a good throat! Let me embrace thee, thou glorious youth, thou rogue! What thinkest thou Crœsus? my daughter Tachot can speak of nothing else than of this beardless youth, who seems to have quite turned her little head with his sweet looks and words. Thou needest not to blush, young madcap! A man such as thou art, may well look at king's daughters; but wert thou thy father Cyrus himself, I could not allow my Tachot to leave me for Persia!"

"Father!" whispered the crown-prince Psamtik, interrupting this conversation. "Father, take care what you say, and remember Phanes." The king turned a frowning glance on his son; but following his advice, took much less part in the conversation, which now became more general.

The seat at the banquet-table, occupied by Aristomachus, placed him nearly opposite to Crœsus, on whom, in total silence and without once indulging in a smile at the king's jests, his eyes had been fixed from the beginning of the revel. When the Pharaoh ceased to speak, he accosted Crœsus suddenly with the following question: "I would know, Lydian, whether the snow still covered the mountains, when ye left Persia."

Smiling, and a little surprised at this strange speech, Crœsus answered: "Most of the Persian mountains were green when we started for Egypt four months ago; but there are heights in the land of Cambyses on which, even in the hottest seasons, the snow never melts,[135] and the glimmer of their white crests we could still perceive, as we descended into the plains."

The Spartan's face brightened visibly, and Crœsus, attracted by this serious, earnest man, asked his name.

"My name is Aristomachus."

"That name seems known to me."

"You were acquainted with many Hellenes, and my name is common among them."

"Your dialect would bespeak you a Dorian; and in my opinion a Spartan."

"I was one once."

"And now no more?"

"He who forsakes his native land without permission, is worthy of death."

"Have you forsaken it with your own free-will?"

"Yes."

"For what reason?"

"To escape dishonor."

"What was your crime?"

"I had committed none."

"You were accused unjustly?"

"Yes."

"Who was the author of your ill-fortune?"

"Yourself."

Crœsus started from his seat. The serious tone and gloomy face of the Spartan proved that this was no jest,

135. More especially on the Demawend. I would refer the reader to the ascent of this mountain as described by Brugsch in his very interesting account of travels in Persia. I. p. 284.

and those who sat near the speakers, and had been following this strange dialogue, were alarmed and begged Aristomachus to explain his words.

He hesitated and seemed unwilling to speak; at last, however, at the king's summons, he began thus:

"In obedience to the oracle,[136] you, Crœsus, had chosen us Lacedæmonians, as the most powerful among the Hellenes, to be your allies against the might of Persia; and you gave us gold for the statue of Apollo on Mount Thornax. The ephori, on this, resolved to present you with a gigantic bronze wine-bowl, richly wrought. I was chosen as bearer of this gift. Before reaching Sardis our ship was wrecked in a storm. The wine-cup sank with it, and we reached Samos with nothing but our lives. On returning home I was accused by enemies, and those who grudged my good fortune, of having sold both ship and wine-vessel to the Samians. As they could not convict me of the crime, and had yet determined on my ruin, I was sentenced to two days' and nights' exposure on the pillory. My foot was chained to it during the night; but before the morning of disgrace dawned, my brother brought me secretly a sword, that my honor might be saved, though at the expense of my life. But I could not die before revenging myself on the men who had worked my ruin; and therefore, cutting the manacled foot from my leg, I escaped, and hid in the rushes on the banks of the Eurotas. My brother brought me food and drink in secret; and after two months I was able to walk on the wooden leg you now see. Apollo undertook my revenge; he never misses his mark, and my two worst opponents died of the plague. Still I durst not return home, and

136. Herod. I. 52. 54. 69. 70. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VI. 2. 5.

at length took ship from Gythium to fight against the Persians under you, Crœsus. On landing at Teos, I heard that you were king no longer, that the mighty Cyrus, the father of yonder beautiful youth, had conquered the powerful province of Lydia in a few weeks, and reduced the richest of kings to beggary."

Every guest gazed at Aristomachus in admiration. Crœsus shook his hard hand; and Bartja exclaimed: "Spartan, I would I could take you back with me to Susa, that my friends there might see what I have seen myself, the most courageous, the most honorable of men!"

"Believe me, boy," returned Aristomachus smiling, "every Spartan would have done the same. In our country it needs more courage to be a coward than a brave man."

"And you, Bartja," cried Darius, the Persian king's cousin, "could you have borne to stand at the pillory?"

Bartja reddened, but it was easy to see that he too preferred death to disgrace.

"Zopyrus, what say you?" asked Darius of the third young Persian.

"I could mutilate my own[137] limbs for love of you two," answered he, grasping unobserved the hands of his two friends.

With an ironical smile Psamtik sat watching this scene—the pleased faces of Amasis, Crœsus and Gyges, the meaning glances of the Egyptians, and the contented looks with which Aristomachus gazed on the young heroes.

Ibykus now told of the oracle which had promised

137. Further on in our story we shall see that this apparently hyperbolical protestation was carried out by Zopyrus.

Aristomachus a return to his native land, on the approach of the men from the snowy mountains, and at the same time, mentioned the hospitable house of Rhodopis.

On hearing this name Psamtik grew restless; Crœsus expressed a wish to form the acquaintance of the Thracian matron, of whom Æsop had related so much that was praiseworthy; and, as the other guests, many of whom had lost consciousness through excessive drinking, were leaving the hall, the dethroned monarch, the poet, the sculptor and the Spartan hero made an agreement to go to Naukratis the next day, and there enjoy the conversation of Rhodopis.

CHAPTER VI.

On the night following the banquet just described, Amasis allowed himself only three hours' rest. On this, as on every other morning, the young priests wakened him at the first cock-crow, conducted him as usual to the bath, arrayed him in the royal vestments and led him to the altar in the court of the palace, where in presence of the populace he offered sacrifice. During the offering the priests sang prayers in a loud voice, enumerated the virtues of their king, and, that blame might in no case light on the head of their ruler, made his bad advisers responsible for every deadly sin committed in ignorance.

They exhorted him to the performance of good deeds, while extolling his virtues; read aloud profitable portions of the holy writings, containing the deeds and

sayings of great men, and then conducted him to his apartments, where letters and information from all parts of the kingdom awaited him.[138]

Amasis was in the habit of observing most faithfully these daily-repeated ceremonies and hours of work; the remaining portion of the day he spent as it pleased him, and generally in cheerful society.[139]

The priests reproached him with this, alleging that such a life was not suited to a monarch; and on one occasion he had thus replied to the indignant high-priest: "Look at this bow! if always bent it must lose its power, but, if used for half of each day and then allowed to rest, it will remain strong and useful till the string breaks."

Amasis had just signed his name to the last letter, granting the petition of a Nomarch[140] for money to

138. This arrangement of the day of a king of Egypt, given by Diodorus (I. 70.), is in its principal particulars confirmed by the monuments.

139. Herod. II. 173.

140. Nomarch was the title given to the supreme administrators of the provinces or Nomoi, into which the entire kingdom of Egypt was divided. The word Nomos (νομός) is purely Greek and probably signified originally a district of pasture or meadow-land. The Egyptian word is *p-tasch* or *hesp*. We are now, more especially owing to the labors of Harris, Brugsch, Parthey, Dümichen and Jacques de Rougé, possessed of the most exact information on the division of the ancient kingdom of the Pharaohs. The results arrived at by the above-mentioned scholars, were obtained through the discovery of numerous lists of the Nomoi carved in the temple walls, from which it can be seen that the entire kingdom was divided into 50 provinces or districts, viz: 26 for Upper, and 24 for Lower Egypt. Each of these was subdivided into 3 smaller ones. A very correct definition of the Nomos is given by Cyril, bishop of Alexandria. *Esai.* 19. From the latest discoveries it seems probable, that the limits of the Nomoi were not determined by local conditions, but by accurate mathematical measurements. Inferior in rank to the Nomarchs, who governed each an entire province, and probably resided in its metropolis, were the Toparchs, who administered the affairs of the local circles. These smaller districts were again divided into plots of meadow or pasture-land (ἄρουραι, μερίδες). Strabo 787.

carry on different embankments[141] rendered necessary by the last inundation, when a servant entered, bringing a request from the crown-prince Psamtik for an audience of a few minutes.

Amasis, who till this moment had been smiling cheerfully at the cheering reports from all parts of the country, now became suddenly serious and thoughtful. After long delay he answered: "Go and inform the prince that he may appear."

Psamtik appeared, pale and gloomy as ever; he bowed low and reverentially, on entering his father's presence.

Amasis nodded silently in return, and then asked abruptly and sternly: "What is thy desire? my time is limited."

"For your son, more than for others," replied the prince with quivering lips. "Seven times have I petitioned for the great favor, which thou grantest for the first time to-day."

"No reproaches! I suspect the reason of thy visit. Thou desirest an answer to thy doubts as to the birth of thy sister Nitetis."

"I have no curiosity; I come rather to warn thee, and to remind thee that I am not the only one who is acquainted with this mystery."

"Speakest thou of Phanes?"

"Of whom else should I speak? He is banished

141. Embankments were peculiarly necessary on the shores of the Nile, and the Pharaohs took much pride in maintaining them. Herodotus speaks of the embankment of the western arm of the Nile near Memphis, constructed by Menes, which information may be correct. Bunsen, *Aegyptens Stelle i. d. Weltgeschichte* II. p. 40. There is no longer any doubt that the lake of Mœris was excavated as a means of regulating the inundations of the river. Lepsius, *Chronol.* I. p. 262. Linant de Bellefonds, *Mémoire sur le lac de Mœris.* See also H. Stephan, *das heutige Aegypten* p. 8.

from Egypt and from his own country, and must leave Naukratis in a few days. What guarantee hast thou, that he will not betray us to the Persians?"

"The friendship and kindness which I have always shown him."

"Dost thou believe in the gratitude of men?"

"No! but I rely on my own discernment of character. Phanes will not betray us! he is my friend, I repeat it!"

"Thy friend perhaps, but my mortal enemy!"

"Then stand on thy guard! I have nothing to fear from him."

"For thyself perhaps nought, but for our country! O father, reflect that though as thy son I may be hateful in thine eyes, yet as Egypt's future I ought to be near thy heart. Remember, that at thy death, which may the gods long avert, I shall represent the existence of this glorious land as thou dost now; my fall will be the ruin of thine house, of Egypt!"

Amasis became more and more serious, and Psamtik went on eagerly: "Thou knowest that I am right! Phanes can betray our land to any foreign enemy; he is as intimately acquainted with it as we are; and beside this, he possesses a secret, the knowledge of which would convert our most powerful ally into a most formidable enemy."

"There thou art in error. Though not mine, Nitetis is a king's daughter and will know how to win the love of her husband."

"Were she the daughter of a god, she could not save thee from Cambyses' wrath, if he discovers the treachery; lying is to a Persian the worst of crimes,[142]

142. Herod. I. 138. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 8. 7. *Avesta* (Spiegel). *Fargard* IV. See also Vol. II. note 190.

to be deceived the greatest disgrace; thou hast deceived the highest and proudest of the nation, and what can one inexperienced girl avail, when hundreds of women, deeply versed in intrigue and artifice, are striving for the favor of their lord?"

"Hatred and revenge are good masters in the art of rhetoric," said Amasis in a cutting tone. "And think'st thou then, oh, foolish son, that I should have undertaken such a dangerous game without due consideration? Phanes may tell the Persians what he likes, he can never prove his point. I, the father, Ladice the mother must know best whether Nitetis is our child or not. We call her so, who dare aver the contrary? If it please Phanes to betray our land to any other enemy beside the Persians, let him; I fear nothing! Thou wouldst have me ruin a man who has been my friend, to whom I owe much gratitude, who has served me long and faithfully; and this without offence from his side. Rather will I shelter him from thy revenge, knowing as I do the impure source from which it springs."

"My father!"

"Thou desirest the ruin of this man, because he hindered thee from taking forcible possession of the granddaughter of Rhodopis, and because thine own incapacity moved me to place him in thy room as commander of the troops. Ah! thou growest pale! Verily, I owe Phanes thanks for confiding to me your vile intentions, and so enabling me to bind my friends and supporters, to whom Rhodopis is precious, more firmly to my throne."

"And is it thus thou speakest of these strangers, my father? dost thou thus forget the ancient glory of Egypt? Despise me, if thou wilt; I know thou lovest

me not; but say not that to be great we need the help of strangers! Look back on our history! Were we not greatest when our gates were closed to the stranger, when we depended on ourselves and our own strength, and lived according to the ancient laws of our ancestors and our gods? Those days beheld the most distant lands subjugated by Rameses,[143] and heard Egypt cele-

143. Rameses the Great, son of Sethos, reigned over Egypt 1394-1328 B. C. He was called Sesostris by the Greeks; see Lepsius (*Chron. d. Aegypter, p.* 538.) on the manner in which this confusion of names arose. Egypt attained the zenith of her power under this king, whose army, according to Diodorus (I. 53-58), consisted of 600,000 foot and 24,000 horsemen, 27,000 chariots and 400 ships of war. With these hosts he subdued many of the Asiatic and African nations, carving his name and likeness, as trophies of victory, on the rocks of the conquered countries. Herodotus speaks of having seen two of these inscriptions himself (II. 102-106.) and two are still to be found not far from Bairut, the ancient Βεοόη or Βηυτός. Drawings of these have been given by Guys and Wyse, and are also to be found in the *Annales de l' institut de corresp. Archéol. Rome* 1834. It is probably in reference to these pictures and inscriptions that the Egyptian monuments call him, "He who holds the world firmly by means of the monuments bearing his name," *cherta-u em menn-u her ran-f.* His conquests brought vast sums of tribute into Egypt. Tacitus *annal. II.* 60. and these enabled him to erect magnificent buildings in the whole length of his land from Nubia to Tanis, but more especially in Thebes, the city in which he resided. One of the obelisks erected by Rameses at Heliopolis is now standing in the *Place de la Concorde at Paris*, and has been lately translated by F. Chabas. On the walls of the yet remaining palaces and temples, built under this mighty king, we find, even to this day, thousands of pictures representing himself, his armed hosts, the many nations subdued by the power of his arms, and the divinities to whose favor he believed these victories were owing. Among the latter Ammon and Bast seem to have received his especial veneration, and, on the other hand, we read in these inscriptions that the gods were very willing to grant the wishes of their favorite. A poetical description of the wars he waged with the Cheta is to be found in long lines of hieroglyphics on the south wall of the hall of columns of Rameses II. at Karnak, also at Luxor and in the Sallier Papyrus, and an epic poem referring to his mighty deeds in no less than six different places. This has been treated by Vicomte E. de Rougé. The very interesting treaty of peace, concluded by Rameses with the Cheta has been preserved to us and translated by Chabas in the appendix to his Analysis of the *Papyrus Anastasis I. Voyage d'un Egyptien.* The portrait with the slightly arched nose, representing him in the enthusiasm of enterprise, is highly characteristic. The existing monuments enable us to follow his entire history, and to become acquainted with every

brated in the whole world as its first and greatest nation. What are we now? The king himself calls beggars and foreigners the supporters of his throne, and devises a petty stratagem to secure the friendship of a power over whom we were victorious before the Nile was infested by these strangers.[144] Egypt was then a mighty Queen in glorious apparel; she is now a painted woman decked out in tinsel!"

"Have a care what thou sayest!" shouted Amasis stamping on the floor. "Egypt was never so great, so flourishing as now! Rameses carried our arms into distant lands and earned blood; through my labors the products of our industry have been carried to all parts of the world and instead of blood, have brought us treasure and blessing. Rameses caused the blood and sweat of his subjects to flow in streams for the honor of his own great name; under my rule their blood flows rarely, and the sweat of their brow only in works of usefulness. Every citizen can now end his days in prosperity and comfort. Ten thousand populous cities rise on the shores of the Nile,[145] not a foot of the soil

member of his family. The finest statue of him is in the Egyptian museum at Turin. Egyptian art reached its zenith in the reign of his father Seti.

144. Josephus (following Manetho) relates that Rameses also conquered the Medes? This would not be so improbable if we may consider Bachtan, where in the 20th dynasty we find one of the Pharaohs levying tribute, to be Ekbatana. Bachtan was certainly in Asia. There is, however, much cause to doubt this etymology. Brugsch believes it to be Bachi. See the Bentrescht Stela in the library at Paris. E. de Rougé, *Etude sur une stèle égyptienne etc. Journ. Asiat.* 1856—1858.

145. Herod II. 177. This information seems to be exaggerated, as according to Diodorus, the population of Egypt at the time of the Ptolemies did not exceed 7 millions. Diod. I. 31. Josephus makes it 7,500,000. The number given by Theokritus is nothing more than a mnemonic play on the number 3. Lane, in his account of the manners and customs of the modern Egyptians, reckons that the country could supply food for 8 million inhabitants. Champollion *le jeune* believes that 6—7 millions may be accepted as the correct number. In

lies untilled, every child enjoys the protection of law and justice, and every ill-doer shuns the watchful eye of the authorities.

"In case of attack from without, have we not, as defenders of those god-given bulwarks,[146] our cataracts, our sea and our deserts, the finest army that ever bore arms? Thirty thousand Hellenes beside our entire Egyptian military caste? such is the present condition of Egypt! Rameses purchased the bright tinsel of empty fame with the blood and tears of his people. To me they are indebted for the pure gold of a peaceful welfare as citizens—to me and to my predecessors, the Saitic kings!"

"And yet I tell thee," cried the prince, "that a worm is gnawing at the root of Egypt's greatness and her life. This struggle for riches and splendor corrupts the hearts of the people, foreign luxury has given a deadly blow to the simple manners of our citizens, and many an Egyptian has been taught by the Greeks to scoff at the gods of his fathers. Every day brings news of bloody strife between the Greek mercenaries and our native soldiery, between our own people and the strangers. The shepherd and his flock are at variance; the wheels of the state machinery are grinding one another and thus the state itself, into total ruin. This once, father, though never again, I must speak out clearly what is weighing on my heart. While engaged in contending

1830 the population of Egypt amounted to 2,500,000 souls according to Lanc. According to Stephan, *Das heutige Aegypten*, 1872, p. 58. Egypt in 1866 had 4,848,529 inhabitants.

146. The science of fortification was very fairly understood by the ancient Egyptians. Walled and battlemented forts are to be seen depicted on their monuments. We have already endeavored to show (see our work on Egypt. I. 78 and following) that, on the northeast, Egypt was defended from Asiatic invasion by a line of forts, extending from Pelusium to the Red Sea.

with the priests, thou hast seen with calmness the young might of Persia roll on from the East, consuming the nations on its way, and, like a devouring monster, growing more and more formidable from every fresh prey. Thine aid was not, as thou hadst intended, given to the Lydians and Babylonians against the enemy, but to the Greeks in the building of temples to their false gods. At last resistance seemed hopeless; a whole hemisphere with its rulers lay in submission at the feet of Persia; but even then the gods willed Egypt a chance of deliverance. Cambyses desired thy daughter in marriage. Thou, however, too weak to sacrifice thine own flesh and blood for the good of all, hast substituted another maiden, not thine own child, as an offering to the mighty monarch; and at the same time, in thy soft-heartedness, wilt spare the life of a stranger in whose hand lie the fortunes of this realm, and who will assuredly work its ruin; unless indeed, worn out by internal dissension, it perish even sooner from its own weakness!"

Thus far Amasis had listened to these revilings of all he held dearest in silence, though pale, and trembling with rage; but now he broke forth in a voice, the trumpet-like sound of which pealed through the wide hall: "Know'st thou not then, thou boasting and revengeful son of evil, thou future destroyer of this ancient and glorious kingdom, know'st thou not whose life must be the sacrifice, were not my children, and the dynasty which I have founded, dearer to me than the welfare of the whole realm? Thou, Psamtik, thou art the man, branded by the gods, feared by men—the man to whose heart love and friendship are strangers, whose face is never seen to smile, nor his soul known to feel compassion! It is not, however, through thine own sin

that thy nature is thus unblessed, that all thine undertakings end unhappily. Give heed, for now I am forced to relate what I had hoped long to keep secret from thine ears. After dethroning my predecessor, I forced him to give me his sister Tentcheta in marriage. She loved me; a year after marriage there was promise of a child. During the night preceding thy birth I fell asleep at the bedside of my wife. I dreamed that she was lying on the shores of the Nile, and complained to me of pain in the breast. Bending down, I beheld a cypress-tree springing from her heart. It grew larger and larger, black and spreading, twined its roots around thy mother and strangled her. A cold shiver seized me, and I was on the point of flying from the spot, when a fierce hurricane came from the East, struck the tree and overthrew it, so that its spreading branches were cast into the Nile. Then the waters ceased to flow; they congealed, and, in place of the river, a gigantic mummy lay before me. The towns on its banks dwindled into huge funereal urns, surrounding the vast corpse of the Nile as in a tomb. At this I awoke and caused the interpreters of dreams to be summoned. None could explain the vision, till at last the priests of the Libyan Ammon gave me the following interpretation 'Tentcheta will die in giving birth to a son. The cypress, which strangled its mother, is this gloomy, unhappy man. In his days a people shall come from the East and shall make of the Nile, that is of the Egyptians, dead bodies, and of their cities ruinous heaps; these are the urns for the dead, which thou sawest.'"

Psamtik listened as if turned into stone; his father continued; "Thy mother died in giving birth to thee;

fiery-red hair, the mark of the sons of Typhon,[147] grew around thy brow; thou becam'st a gloomy man. Misfortune pursued thee and robbed thee of a beloved wife and four of thy children. The astrologers computed that even as I had been born under the fortunate sign of Ammon, so thy birth had been watched over by the rise of the awful planet Seb.[148] Thou . . ." But here

147. Typhon, in Egyptian Seth, the god of evil and misfortune, passed through a remarkable transformation in the religious consciousness of the Egyptians. In the earliest ages of their history he was not regarded as a destructive deity. Mariette proves that he was worshipped at Memphis from the 5th dynasty. His first appearance as a deity of destruction seems to have been in the time of the Hyksos, who worshipped him exclusively. Before this the principle of evil had been personified by the serpent Appe, and Seth had been worshipped as the god of war and of foreign countries. If their foes were worsted in battle the Egyptians glorified this deity, but despised and maltreated him if the contrary were the case. Rameses took pleasure in calling himself a worshipper of Seth; but succeeding monarchs erased his name wherever they found it, and at last the god was universally detested as the principle of destruction. According to Plutarch he had dominion over all the passionate, ill-regulated, unsteadfast, false and foolish feelings in the souls of men. In one Papyrus he is called "the omnipotent destroyer and devastator." Lepsius, *erster Götterkreis p.* 53. The destroying forces of nature were reflected in his being. All noxious plants and destructive animals were his property, and the capricious and unfruitful sea formed a part of his dominions. His favorite animals were the stubborn ass, the disgusting hippopotamus, the voracious crocodile and the wild boar. Red was his distinctive color, in consequence of which people with red hair were called Typhonian, and are said to have been offered in sacrifice to this deity. Diod. I. 88. Plutarch gives the same account. In the Papyrus Ebers, all injurious and evil things are called "red." Papyrus Ebers, line 20. But these human sacrifices had already ceased to be practised at a very early period, though red-haired Egyptians continued to be held in contempt, and were often pelted with mud, much later. The pictures of the god represent him as deformed, having a back covered with bristles and the head of a crocodile, an ass, or a hippopotamus. In the myth of Isis and Osiris we find Seth-Typhon again.

148. The Egyptian astrologers had a world-wide renown. Herodotus (II. 82.) says, that they were the inventors of astrology and Aristoteles (*de coelo* II. 12.), that they were the first astronomers. Each hour, with them, had its respective planets boding good fortune or the reverse; horoscopes drawn from the position of the stars determined these predictions. Ammon (Jupiter) was invariably a fortunate star, Seb (Saturn) unpropitious, Thoth (Mercury) fluctuating. It was also believed that even a single limb could be affected by certain stars.

Amasis broke off, for Psamtik, in the anguish produced by these fearful disclosures had given way, and with sobs and groans, cried:

"Cease, cruel father! spare me at least the bitter words, that I am the only son in Egypt who is hated by his father without cause!"

Amasis looked down on the wretched man who had sunk to the earth before him, his face hidden in the folds of his robe, and the father's wrath was changed to compassion. He thought of Psamtik's mother, dead forty years before, and felt he had been cruel in inflicting this poisonous wound on her son's soul. It was the first time for years, that he had been able to feel towards this cold strange man, as a father and a comforter. For the first time he saw tears in the cold eyes of his son, and could feel the joy of wiping them away. He seized the opportunity at once, and bending down over the groaning form, kissed his forehead, raised him from the ground and said gently:

"Forgive my anger, my son! the words that have grieved thee came not from my heart, but were spoken in the haste of wrath. Many years hast thou angered me by thy coldness, hardness and obstinacy; to-day thou hast wounded me again in my most sacred feelings; this hurried me into an excess of wrath. But now all is right between us. Our natures are so diverse that our innermost feelings will never be one, but at least we can act in concert for the future, and show forbearance one towards the other."

Champollion *lettres p.* 239. Firmicus Maternus IV. 16. even mentions the names of two celebrated Egyptian astrologers, Petosiris and Nechepso. See also Diodorus I. 50. 81. II. 92. The monuments abound in astronomical representations, and the calendars of their festivals which have come down to us, confirm the reports of classical writers as to the progress of astronomy in Egypt.

In silence Psamtik bowed down and kissed his father's robe "Not so," exclaimed the latter; "rather let my lips receive thy kiss, as is meet and fitting between father and son! Thou needest not to think again of the evil dream I have related. Dreams are phantoms, and even if sent by the gods, the interpreters thereof are human and erring. Thy hand trembles still, thy cheeks are white as thy robe. I was hard towards thee, harder than a father. . . ."

"Harder than a stranger to strangers," interrupted his son. "Thou hast crushed and broken me, and if till now my face has seldom worn a smile, from this day forward it can be naught but a mirror of my inward misery."

"Not so," said Amasis, laying his hand on his son's shoulder. "If I wound, I can also heal. Tell me the dearest wish of thy heart, it shall be granted thee!"

Psamtik's eyes flashed, his sallow cheeks glowed for a moment, and he answered without consideration, though in a voice still trembling from the shock he had just received: "Deliver Phanes, my enemy, into my power!"

The king remained a few moments in deep thought, then answered: "I knew what thou wouldst ask, and will fulfil thy desire: but I would rather thou hadst asked the half of my treasures. A thousand voices within warn me that I am about to do an unworthy deed and a ruinous—ruinous for myself, for thee, the kingdom and our house. Reflect before acting, and remember, whatever thou mayst meditate against Phanes, not a hair of Rhodopis' head shall be touched. Also, that the persecution of my poor friend is to remain a secret from the Greeks. Where shall I find his

equal as a commander, an adviser and a companion? He is not yet in thy power, however, and I advise thee to remember, that though thou mayst be clever for an Egyptian, Phanes is a clever Greek. I will remind thee too of thy solemn oath to renounce the grandchild of Rhodopis. Methinks vengeance is dearer to thee than love, and the amends I offer will therefore be acceptable! As to Egypt, I repeat once again, she was never more flourishing than now; a fact which none dream of disputing, except the priests, and those who retail their foolish words. And now give ear, if thou wouldst know the origin of Nitetis. Self-interest will enjoin secrecy."

Psamtik listened eagerly to his father's communication, indicating his gratitude at the conclusion by a warm pressure of the hand.

"Now farewell," said Amasis. "Forget not my words, and above all shed no blood! I will know nothing of what happens to Phanes, for I hate cruelty and would not be forced to stand in horror of my own son. But thou, thou rejoicest! My poor Athenian, better were it for thee, hadst thou never entered Egypt!"

Long after Psamtik had left, his father continued to pace the hall in deep thought. He was sorry he had yielded; it already seemed as if he saw the bleeding Phanes lying massacred by the side of the dethroned Hophra. "It is true, he could have worked our ruin," was the plea he offered to the accuser within his own breast, and with these words, he raised his head, called his servants and left the apartment with a smiling countenance.

Had this sanguine man, this favorite of fortune, thus

speedily quieted the warning voice within, or was he strong enough to cloak his torture with a smile?

CHAPTER VII.

PSAMTIK went at once from his father's apartments to the temple of the goddess Neith. At the entrance he asked for the high-priest and was begged by one of the inferior priests to wait, as the great Neithotep was at that moment praying in the holiest sanctuary[149] of the exalted Queen of Heaven.

After a short time a young priest appeared with the intelligence that his superior awaited the Prince's visit.

Psamtik had seated himself under the shadow of the sacred grove of silver poplars bordering the shores of the consecrated lake,[150] holy to the great Neith. He rose immediately, crossed the temple-court, paved with

149. The temples of Egypt were so constructed as to intensify the devotion of the worshipper by conducting him onward through a series of halls or chambers gradually diminishing in size. "The way through these temples is clearly indicated, no digression is allowed, no error possible. We wander on through the huge and massive gates of entrance, between the ranks of sacred animals. The worshipper is received into an ample court, but by degrees the walls on either side approach one another, the halls become less lofty, all is gradually tending towards one point. And thus we wander on, the sights and sounds of God's world without attract us no longer, we see nothing but the sacred representations which encompass us so closely, feel only the solemnity of the temple in which we stand. And the consecrated walls embrace us ever more and more closely, until at last we reach the lonely, resonant chamber occupied by the divinity himself, and entered by no human being save his priest." Schnaase, *Kunstgeschichte* I. 394.

150. This lake exists still, near the ruins of Sais. Herod. II. 170. Wilkinson IV. 192. II. 509. Map in the *Description de l'Egypte*. Lepsius, *Denkmäler*. *Abth*. I. Pl. 55 *and* 56. Lakes, sacred to various divinities, are found in most temples. Drawing of ruins by Ebers. *Aegypten in Bild und Wort*. 1. p. 79.

stone and asphalte, on which the sun's rays were darting like fiery arrows, and turned into one of the long avenues of Sphinxes which led to the isolated Pylons* before the gigantic temple of the goddess. He then passed through the principal gate, ornamented, as were all Egyptian temple-entrances, with the winged sun's disc.[150-a] Above its widely-opened folding doors arose on either side, tower-like buildings, slender obelisks and waving flags. The front of the temple, rising from the earth in the form of an obtuse angle, had somewhat the appearance of a fortress, and was covered with colored pictures and inscriptions. Through the porch Psamtik passed on into a lofty entrance-chamber, and from thence into the great hall itself, the ceiling of which was strewn with thousands of golden stars, and supported by four rows of lofty pillars. Their capitals were carved in imitation of the lotus-flower, and these, the shafts of the columns, the walls of this huge hall, and indeed every niche and corner that met the eye were covered with brilliant colors and hieroglyphics. The columns rose to a gigantic height, the eye seemed to wander through immeasurable space, and the air breathed by the worshippers was heavy with the fragrance of Kyphi and incense, and the odors which arose

150-a. Until very recently, the monuments have afforded no full explanation of the meaning of the winged disk of the sun. From the text of Edsu, published by Naville and translated by Brugsch in his treatise on "the winged disk of the sun," we learn that Hor Hut (the Horus of Edsu) under the form of a winged disk of the sun, overthrew the spirit of evil and his allies, therefore in memory of his victory, the winged disk with the uræus serpent was placed above all the temple-gates and sanctuaries in Egypt. Thus this symbol reminded the worshipper of the final triumph of good over evil, light over darkness, fertility over barrenness, life over death.

* The isolated gate-ways with slanting piers or side-walls, which led to the Egyptian temples, and which perhaps obtained for Homer's Thebes the name, "City of a hundred gates."

from the laboratory attached to the temple. Strains of soft music, proceeding from invisible hands, flowed on unceasingly, only occasionally interrupted by the deep lowing of the sacred cows of Isis, or the shrill call of the sparrow-hawk of Horus, whose habitations were in one of the adjoining halls. No sooner did the prolonged low of a cow break like distant thunder on the ear, or the sharp cry of the sparrow-hawk shoot like a flash of lightning through the nerves of the worshippers, than each crouching form bent lower still, and touched the pavement with his forehead. On a portion of this pavement, raised above the rest, stood the priests, some wearing ostrich-feathers on their bald and shining heads; others panther-skins over their white-robed shoulders. Muttering and singing, bowing low and rising again, they swung the censers and poured libations of pure water to the gods out of golden vessels. In this immense temple man seemed a dwarf in his own eyes. All his senses even to the organs of respiration, were occupied by objects far removed from daily life, objects that thrilled and almost oppressed him. Snatched from all that was familiar in his daily existence, he seemed to grow dizzy and seek support beyond himself. To this the voice of the priests directed him and the cries of the sacred animals were believed to prove a divinity at hand.

Psamtik assumed the posture of a worshipper on the low, gilded and cushioned couch set apart for him, but was unable to pay any real devotion, and passed on to the adjoining apartment before mentioned, where the sacred cows of Isis-Neith and the sparrow-hawk of Horus were kept. These creatures were concealed from the gaze of the worshippers by a curtain of rich fabric

embroidered with gold; the people were only allowed an occasional and distant glimpse of the adorable animals. When Psamtik passed they were just being fed; cakes soaked in milk, salt and clover-blossoms were placed in golden cribs for the cows, and small birds of many-colored plumage in the beautifully-wrought and ornamented cage of the sparrow-hawk. But, in his present mood, the heir to the throne of Egypt had no eye for these rare sights; but ascended at once, by means of a hidden staircase, to the chambers lying near the observatory, where the high-priest was accustomed to repose after the temple-service.

Neithotep, a man of seventy years, was seated in a splendid apartment. Rich Babylonian carpets covered the floor and his chair was of gold, cushioned with purple. A tastefully-carved footstool supported his feet, his hands held a roll covered with hieroglyphics, and a boy stood behind him with a fan of ostrich-feathers to keep away the insects.

The face of the old man was deeply lined now, but it might once have been handsome, and in the large blue eyes there still lay evidence of a quick intellect and a dignified self-respect.

His artificial curls had been laid aside, and the bald, smooth head formed a strange contrast to the furrowed countenance, giving an appearance of unusual height to the forehead, generally so very low among the Egyptians. The brightly-colored walls of the room, on which numerous sentences in hieroglyphic characters were painted, the different statues of the goddess painted likewise in gay colors, and the snow-white garments of the aged priest, were calculated to fill a stranger not only with wonder, but with a species of awe.

The old man received the prince with much affection, and asked:

"What brings my illustrious son to the poor servant of the Deity?"

"I have much to report to thee, my father;" answered Psamtik with a triumphant smile, "for I come in this moment from Amasis."

"Then he has at length granted thee an audience?"

"At length!"

"Thy countenance tells me that thou hast been favorably received by our lord, thy father."

"After having first experienced his wrath. For, when I laid before him the petition with which thou hadst entrusted me, he was exceeding wroth and nearly crushed me by his awful words."

"Thou hadst surely grieved him by thy language. Didst thou approach him as I advised thee, with lowliness, as a son humbly beseeching his father?"

"No, my father, I was irritated and indignant."

"Then was Amasis right to be wrathful, for never should a son meet his father in anger; still less when he hath a request to bring before him. Thou know'st the promise, 'The days of him that honoreth his father shall be many.'[150-b] In this one thing, my scholar, thou errest always; to gain thine ends thou usest violence and roughness, where good and gentle words would more surely prevail. A kind word hath far more power than an angry one, and much may depend on the way in which a man ordereth his speech. Hearken to that which I will now relate. In former years there was a king in Egypt named Snefru, who ruled in Memphis.

150-b. This Egyptian command bears a remarkable resemblance to the fifth in the Hebrew decalogue, both having a promise annexed. It occurs in the Prisse Papyrus, the most ancient sacred writing extant.

And it came to pass that he dreamed, and in his dream his teeth fell out of his mouth. And he sent for the soothsayers and told them the dream. The first interpreter answered: 'Woe unto thee, O king, all thy kinsmen shall die before thee!' Then was Snefru wroth, caused this messenger of evil to be scourged, and sent for a second interpreter. He answered: 'O king, live for ever, thy life shall be longer than the life of thy kinsmen and the men of thy house!' Then the king smiled and gave presents unto this interpreter, for though the interpretations were one, yet he had understood to clothe his message in a web of fair and pleasant words. Apprehendest thou? then hearken to my voice, and refrain from harsh words, remembering that to the ear of a ruler the manner of a man's speech is weightier than its matter."

"Oh my father, how often hast thou thus admonished me! how often have I been convinced of the evil consequences of my rough words and angry gestures! but I cannot change my nature, I cannot . . ."

"Say rather: I will not; for he that is indeed a man, dare never again commit those sins of which he has once repented. But I have admonished sufficiently. Tell me now how thou didst calm the wrath of Amasis."

"Thou knowest my father. When he saw that he had wounded me in the depths of my soul by his awful words, he repented him of his anger. He felt he had been too hard, and desired to make amends at any price."

"He hath a kindly heart, but his mind is blinded, and his senses taken captive," cried the priest. "What might not Amasis do for Egypt, would he but hearken to our counsel, and to the commandments of the gods!"

"But hear me, my father! in his emotion he granted me the life of Phanes!"

"Thine eyes flash, Psamtik! that pleaseth me not. The Athenian must die, for he has offended the gods; but though he that condemns must let justice have her way, he should have no pleasure in the death of the condemned; rather should he mourn. Now speak; didst thou obtain aught further?"

"The king declared unto me to what house Nitetis belongs."

"And further naught?"

"No, my father; but art thou not eager to learn . . . ?"

"Curiosity is a woman's vice; moreover, I have long known all that thou canst tell me."

"But didst thou not charge me but yesterday to ask my father this question?"

"I did do so to prove thee, and know whether thou wert resigned to the Divine will, and wert walking in those ways wherein alone thou canst become worthy of initiation into the highest grade of knowledge. Thou hast told us faithfully all that thou hast heard, and thereby proved that thou canst obey—the first virtue of a priest."

"Thou knewest then the father of Nitetis?"

"I myself pronounced the prayer over king Hophra's tomb."

"But who imparted the secret to thee?"

"The eternal stars, my son, and my skill in reading them."

"And do these stars never deceive?"

"Never him that truly understands them."

Psamtik turned pale. His father's dream and his own fearful horoscope passed like awful visions through

his mind. The priest detected at once the change in his features and said gently: "Thou deem'st thyself a lost man because the heavens prognosticated evil at thy birth; but take comfort, Psamtik; I observed another sign in the heavens at that moment, which escaped the notice of the astrologers. Thy horoscope was a threatening, a very threatening one, but its omens may be averted, they may . . ."

"O tell me, father, tell me how!"

"They must turn to good, if thou, forgetful of all else, canst live alone to the gods, paying a ready obedience to the Divine voice audible to us their priests alone in the innermost and holiest sanctuary."

"Father, I am ready to obey thy slightest word."

"The great goddess Neith, who rules in Sais, grant this, my son!" answered the priest solemnly. "But now leave me alone," he continued kindly, "lengthened devotions and the weight of years bring weariness. If possible, delay the death of Phanes, I wish to speak with him before he dies. Yet one more word. A troop of Ethiopians arrived yesterday. These men cannot speak a word of Greek, and under a faithful leader, acquainted with the Athenians and the locality, they would be the best agents for getting rid of the doomed man, as their ignorance of the language and the circumstances render treachery or gossip impossible. Before starting for Naukratis, they must know nothing of the design of their journey; the deed once accomplished, we can send them back to Kush.* Remember, a secret can never be too carefully kept! Farewell."

Psamtik had only left the room a few moments, when a young priest entered, one of the king's attendants.

* The Egyptian name for Ethiopia.

"Have I listened well, father?" he enquired of the old man.

"Perfectly, my son. Nothing of that which passed between Amasis and Psamtik has escaped thine ears. May Isis[151] preserve them long to thee!"

"Ah, father, a deaf man could have heard every word in the ante-chamber to-day, for Amasis bellowed like an ox."

"The great Neith has smitten him with the lack of prudence, yet I command thee to speak of the Pharaoh with more reverence. But now return, keep thine eyes open and inform me at once if Amasis, as is possible, should attempt to thwart the conspiracy against Phanes. Thou wilt certainly find me here. Charge the attendants to admit no one, and to say I am at my devotions in the Holy of holies. May the ineffable One protect thy footsteps!"

While Psamtik was making every preparation for the capture of Phanes, Crœsus, accompanied by his followers, had embarked on board a royal bark, and was on his way down the Nile to spend the evening with Rhodopis.

His son Gyges and the three young Persians remained in Sais, passing the time in a manner most agreeable to them.

Amasis loaded them with civilities, allowed them, according to Egyptian custom, the society of his queen and of the twin-sisters, as they were called; taught

151. Isis, the wife or sister of Osiris, is the phenomena of nature, by means of which the god is able to reveal himself to human contemplation. For more details regarding this myth, see Vol. II. p. 301.

Gyges the game of draughts,[152] and looking on while the strong, dexterous, young heroes joined his daughters in the game of throwing balls and hoops, so popular among Egyptian maidens,[153] enlivened their amusements with an inexhaustible flow of wit and humor.

"Really," said Bartja, as he watched Nitetis catching the slight hoop, ornamented with gay ribbons, for the hundredth time on her slender ivory rod, "really we must introduce this game at home. We Persians are so different from you Egyptians. Everything new has a special charm for us, while to you it is just as hateful. I shall describe the game to our mother Kassandane, and she will be delighted to allow my brother's wives this new amusement."

"Yes, do, do!" exclaimed the fair Tachot blushing deeply. "Then Nitetis can play too, and fancy herself back again at home and among those she loves; and Bartja," she added in a low voice, "whenever you watch the hoops flying, you too must remember this hour."

"I shall never forget it," answered he with a smile, and then, turning to his future sister-in-law, he called out cheerfully, "Be of good courage, Nitetis, you will be happier than you fancy with us. We Asiatics know

152. The Pharaohs themselves, as well as their subjects, were in the habit of playing at draughts and other similar games. Rosellini gives us Rameses playing with his daughter; see also two Egyptians playing together, Wilkinson II. 419. v. Minutoli, *Gesellschaftliche Spiele bei den alten Aegyptern. Leipziger Illustrirte Zeitung.* An especially beautiful draught-board exists in the Egyptian collection at the Louvre Museum. The Egyptians hoped to be permitted to enjoy these pleasures even in the other world. Birch, *rev. archéol. N. S.* XII. p. 56 and following.

153. v. Minutoli, *Gesellschaftliche Spiele.* Wilkinson II. 429. Rosellini, *Mon. civ.* Pl. 100 *and* 101. Balls that have been found in the tombs are still to be seen; some, for instance, in the Museum at Leyden.

how to honor beauty; and prove it by taking many wives."

Nitetis sighed, and the queen Ladice exclaimed: "On the contrary, that very fact proves that you understand but poorly how to appreciate woman's nature! You can have no idea, Bartja, what a woman feels on finding that her husband—the man who to her is more than life itself, and to whom she would gladly and without reserve give up all that she treasures as most sacred—looks down on her with the same kind of admiration that he bestows on a pretty toy, a noble steed, or a well-wrought wine-bowl. But it is yet a thousand-fold more painful to feel that the love which every woman has a right to possess for herself alone, must be shared with a hundred others!"

"There speaks the jealous wife!" exclaimed Amasis. "Would you not fancy that I had often given her occasion to doubt my faithfulness?"

"No, no, my husband," answered Ladice, "in this point the Egyptian men surpass other nations, that they remain content with that which they have once loved; indeed I venture to assert that an Egyptian wife is the happiest of women.[154] Even the Greeks, who in so many things

154. According to Diodorus (I. 27) the queen of Egypt held a higher position than the king himself. The monuments and lists of names certainly prove that women could rule with sovereign power. The husband of the heiress to the throne became king. They had their own revenues (Diodorus I. 52) and when a princess, after death, was admitted among the goddesses, she received her own priestesses. (Ediet of Canopus.) During the reigns of the Ptolemies many coins were stamped with the queen's image and cities were named for them. We notice also that sons, in speaking of their descent, more frequently reckon it from the mother's than the father's side, that a married woman is constantly alluded to as the "mistress" or "lady" of the house, that according to many a Greek Papyrus they had entire disposal of all their property, no matter in what it consisted, in short that the weaker sex seems to have enjoyed equal influence with the stronger. We learn too that pretenders to the crown were often anxious to se-

may serve as patterns to us, do not know how to appreciate woman rightly. Most of the young Greek girls pass their sad childhood in close rooms, kept to the wheel and the loom by their mothers and those who have charge of them, and when marriageable, are transferred to the quiet house of a husband they do not know, and whose work in life and in the state allows him but seldom to visit his wife's apartments. Only when the most intimate friends and nearest relations are with her husband, does she venture to appear in their midst, and then shyly and timidly, hoping to hear a little of what is going on in the great world outside. Ah, indeed! we women thirst for knowledge too, and there are certain branches of learning at least, which it cannot be right to withhold from those who are to be the mothers and educators of the next generation. What can an Attic mother, without knowledge, without experience, give to her daughters? Naught but her own ignorance. And so it is, that a Hellene, seldom satisfied with the society of his lawful, but, mentally, inferior wife, turns for satisfaction to those courtesans, who, from their constant intercourse with men, have acquired knowledge, and well understand how to adorn it with the flowers of feminine grace, and to season it with the salt of a woman's more refined and delicate wit.* In Egypt it is different. A young girl is allowed to associate freely with the most enlightened men. Youths and maidens meet constantly on festive occasions, learn to know and love one another. The wife is not the slave, but the friend of her husband; the one supplies the deficiencies of the other. In weighty questions the

cure the hand of princesses belonging to a legitimate dynasty. During the king's absence, the queen assumed the regency. (Diodorus I. 17.)

* See Note 10.

stronger decides, but the lesser cares of life are left to her who is the greater in small things. The daughters grow up under careful guidance, for the mother is neither ignorant nor inexperienced. To be virtuous and diligent in her affairs becomes easy to a woman, for she sees that it increases his happiness whose dearest possession she boasts of being, and who belongs to her alone. We women only do that which pleases us! but the Egyptian men understand the art of making us pleased with that which is really good, and with that alone. On the shores of the Nile, Phocylides of Miletus and Hipponax of Ephesus would never have dared to sing their libels on women, nor could the fable of Pandora[155] have been possibly invented here!"

"How beautifully you speak!" exclaimed Bartja. "Greek was not easy to learn, but I am very glad now that I did not give it up in despair, and really paid attention to Crœsus' lessons."

"Who could those men have been," asked Darius, "who dared to speak evil of women?"

"A couple of Greek poets," answered Amasis, "the boldest of men, for I confess I would rather provoke a

155. Simonides of Amorgos, an Iambic poet, who delighted in writing satirical verses on women. He divides them into different classes, which he compares to unclean animals, and considers that the only woman worthy of a husband and able to make him happy must be like the bee. The well-known fable of Pandora owes its origin to Simonides. He lived about 650 B. C. The Egyptians too, speak very severely of bad women, comparing them quite in the Simonides style to beasts of prey (hyenas, lions and panthers). We find this sentence on a vicious woman: She is a collection of every kind of meanness, and a bag full of wiles. Chabas, *Papyr. magique Harris. p.* 135. Phocylides of Miletus, a rough and sarcastic, but observant man, imitated Simonides in his style of writing. But the deformed Hipponax of Ephesus, a poet crushed down by poverty, wrote far bitterer verses than Phocylides. He lived about 550 B. C. "His own ugliness (according to Bernhardy) is reflected in every one of his Choliambics." See Welcker, Schneidewin and Bergk for fragments of his poems.

lioness than a woman. But these Greeks do not know what fear is. I will give you a specimen of Hipponax's poetry:

> "There are but two days when a wife,
> Brings pleasure to her husband's life,
> The wedding-day, when hopes are bright,
> And the day he buries her out of his sight."

"Cease, cease," cried Ladice stopping her ears, "that is too bad. Now, Persians, you can see what manner of man Amasis is. For the sake of a joke, he will laugh at those who hold precisely the same opinion as himself. There could not be a better husband. . ."

"Nor a worse wife," laughed Amasis. "Thou wilt make men think that I am a too obedient husband. But now farewell, my children; our young heroes must look at this our city of Sais; before parting, however, I will repeat to them what the malicious Simonides has sung of a good wife:

> "Dear to her spouse from youth to age she grows;
> Fills with fair girls and sturdy boys his house;
> Among all women womanliest seems,
> And heavenly grace about her mild brow gleams.
> A gentle wife, a noble spouse she walks,
> Nor ever with the gossipmongers talks.
> Such women sometimes Zeus to mortals gives,
> The glory and the solace of their lives." 156

"Such is my Ladice! now farewell!"

"Not yet!" cried Bartja. "Let me first speak in defence of our poor Persia and instil fresh courage into my future sister-in-law; but no! Darius, thou must speak, thine eloquence is as great as thy skill in figures and swordsmanship!"

156. Translated by Edwin Arnold.

"Thou speakst of me as if I were a gossip or a shopkeeper,"[157] answered the son of Hystaspes. "Be it so; I have been burning all this time to defend the customs of our country. Know then, Ladice, that if Auramazda[158] dispose the heart of our king in his own good ways, your daughter will not be his slave, but his friend. Know also, that in Persia, though certainly only at high festivals, the king's wives have their places at the men's table, and that we pay the highest reverence to our wives and mothers. A king of Babylon once took a Persian wife; in the broad plains of the Euphrates she fell sick of longing for her native mountains; he caused a gigantic structure to be raised on arches, and the summit thereof to be covered with a depth of rich earth; caused the choicest trees and flowers to be planted there, and watered by artificial machinery. This wonder completed, he led his wife thither; from its top she could look down into the plains below, as from the heights of Rachmed, and with this costly gift he presented her.[159] Tell me, could even an Egyptian give more?"

"And did she recover?" asked Nitetis, without raising her eyes.

"She recovered health and happiness; and you too will soon feel well and happy in our country."

157. This nickname, which Darius afterwards earned, is more fully spoken of at the end of the second volume.

158. Auramazda, called in the cuneiform writings Ormusd, was the mighty, pure and immaculate god of the Persians, always opposed to Angramainjus or Ahriman, the principle of evil and darkness. In the Zend-Avesta Auramazda (according to Spiegel) is called Ahura-Mazda.

159. This stupendous erection is said to have been constructed by Nebuchadnezzar for his Persian wife Amytis. Curtius V. 5. Josephus *contra Apion.* I. 19. *Antiquities* X. 11. 1. Diod. II. 10. For further particulars relative to the hanging-gardens, see note 235.

"And now," said Ladice with a smile, "what, think you, contributed most to the young queen's recovery? the beautiful mountain or the love of the husband, who erected it for her sake?"

"Her husband's love," cried the young girls.

"But Nitetis would not disdain the mountain either," maintained Bartja, "and I shall make it my care that whenever the court is at Babylon, she has the hanging-gardens for her residence."

"But now come," exclaimed Amasis, "unless you wish to see the city in darkness. Two secretaries have been awaiting me yonder for the last two hours. Ho! Sachons! give orders to the captain of the guard to accompany our noble guests with a hundred men."

"But why? a single guide, perhaps one of the Greek officers, would be amply sufficient."

"No, my young friends, it is better so. Foreigners can never be too prudent in Egypt. Do not forget this, and especially be careful not to ridicule the sacred animals. And now farewell, my young heroes, till we meet again this evening over a merry wine-cup."

The Persians then quitted the palace, accompanied by their interpreter, a Greek, but who had been brought up in Egypt, and spoke both languages[160] with equal facility.

Those streets of Sais which lay near the palace wore a pleasant aspect. The houses, many of which were five stories high, were generally covered with pictures or hieroglyphics; galleries with balustrades of carved and gaily-painted wood-work, supported by

160. Psamtik I. is said to have formed a new caste, viz.: the caste of Interpreters, out of those Greeks who had been born and bred up in Egypt. Herod. II. 154. Herodotus himself was probably conducted by such a "Dragoman."

columns also brightly painted, ran round the walls surrounding the courts. In many cases the proprietor's name and rank was to be read on the door,[161] which was, however, well closed and locked. Flowers and shrubs ornamented the flat roofs, on which the Egyptians loved to spend the evening hours, unless indeed, they preferred ascending the mosquito-tower with which nearly every house was provided. These troublesome insects, engendered by the Nile, fly low, and these little watch-towers were built as a protection from them.[162]

The young Persians admired the great, almost excessive cleanliness, with which each house, nay, even the streets themselves, literally shone. The door-plates and knockers sparkled in the sun; paintings, balconies and columns all had the appearance of having been only just finished, and even the street-pavement looked as if it were often scoured.[163] But as the Persians left the neighborhood of the Nile and the palace, the streets became smaller. Sais was built on the slope of a moderately high hill, and had only been the residence of the Pharaohs for two centuries and a half, but, during that comparatively short interval, had risen from an unimportant place into a town of considerable magnitude.

On its river-side the houses and streets were brilliant, but on the hill-slope lay, with but few more respectable exceptions, miserable, poverty-stricken huts

161. Wilkinson II. *p.* 102. 95. 1.

162. Wilkinson II. *p.* 119 *and* 121. Herod. II. 95. Similar little towers can be seen in the present day.

163. The streets of Egyptian towns seem to have been paved, judging from the ruins of Alabastron and Memphis. We know at least with certainty that this was the case with those leading to the temples.

constructed of acacia-boughs and Nile-mud. On the north-west rose the royal citadel.[164]

"Let us turn back here," exclaimed Gyges to his young companions. During his father's absence he was responsible as their guide and protector, and now perceived that the crowd of curious spectators, which had hitherto followed them, was increasing at every step.

"I obey your orders," replied the interpreter, "but yonder in the valley, at the foot of that hill, lies the Saitic city of the dead, and for foreigners I should think that would be of great interest."

"Go forward!" cried Bartja. "For what did we leave Persia, if not to behold these remarkable objects?"

On arriving at an open kind of square surrounded by workmen's booths,[165] and not far from the city of the dead, confused cries rose among the crowd behind them. The children shouted for joy, the women called out, and one voice louder than the rest was heard exclaiming: "Come hither to the fore-court of the temple, and see the works of the great magician, who comes from the western oases of Libya and is endowed with miraculous gifts by Chunsu, the giver of good counsels, and by the great goddess Hekt."[166]

164. The mounds of rubbish indicating the site of the Acropolis of Sais were seen by Lepsius, (*Briefe S.* 13.) and even earlier, by the savants who accompanied the French expedition. We saw them ourselves in 1873. See note 150.

165. Artisans, as well among the ancient as the modern Egyptians, were accustomed to work in the open air.

166. Many texts in the Bible, and narratives related by the ancients, prove that magicians and snake-charmers were not uncommon in ancient Egypt. *Psalm* 58. 4. 5. *Jerem.* 8. 17. Ælian *histor. Animal.* XVII. 5. Lane tells us that at the present day there are more than 300 such snake-charmers in Cairo alone. We have seen many such jugglers in Cairo, Suez, etc. We would remind our readers also of the Psylli of Cyrenaica. We have chosen, so to speak, the divinities

"Follow me to the small temple yonder," said the interpreter, "and you will behold a strange spectacle."

He pushed a way for himself and the Persians through the crowd, obstructed in his course by many a sallow woman and naked child; and at length came back with a priest, who conducted the strangers into the fore-court of the temple. Here, surrounded by various chests and boxes, stood a man in the dress of a priest; beside him on the earth knelt two negroes.

The Libyan* was a man of gigantic stature, with great suppleness of limb and a pair of piercing black eyes. In his hand he held a wind-instrument resembling a modern clarionet, and a number of snakes, known in Egypt to be poisonous, lay coiling themselves over his breast and arms.

On finding himself in the presence of the Persians he bowed low, inviting them by a solemn gesture to gaze at his performances; he then cast off his white robe and began all kinds of tricks with the snakes.

He allowed them to bite him, till the blood trickled down his cheeks; compelled them by the notes of his flute to assume an erect position and perform a kind of dancing evolution; by spitting into their jaws he transformed them to all appearance into motionless rods; and then, dashing them all on to the earth, performed a wild dance in their midst, yet without once touching a single snake.

Like one possessed, he contorted his pliant limbs

Chunsu and Hekt as the tutelary deities of these conjurors, because the former is mentioned on the Bentrescht Stela in the library at Paris, as casting out evil spirits and the goddess Hekt presided over magic.

* The name Libya was applied to the western shores of the Nile and the regions beyond. The Libyan Nomos lay in north-west Egypt; and abounded in serpents, especially in its western portions near the Marmarica which partake of the desert character.

until his eyes seemed starting from his head and a bloody foam issued from his lips.

Suddenly he fell to the ground, apparently lifeless. A slight movement of the lips and a low hissing whistle were the only signs of life; but, on hearing the latter, the snakes crept up and twined themselves like living rings around his neck, legs and body. At last he rose, sang a hymn in praise of the divine power which had made him a magician, and then laid the greater number of his snakes in one of the chests, retaining a few, probably his favorites, to serve as ornaments for his neck and arms.

The second part of this performance consisted of clever conjuring-tricks, in which he swallowed burning flax, balanced swords while dancing, their points standing in the hollow of his eye; drew long strings and ribbons out of the noses of the Egyptian children, exhibited the well-known cup-and-ball trick, and, at length, raised the admiration of the spectators to its highest pitch, by producing five living rabbits from as many ostrich-eggs.

The Persians formed no unthankful portion of the assembled crowd; on the contrary, this scene, so totally new, impressed them deeply.

They felt as if in the realm of miracles, and fancied they had now seen the rarest of all Egyptian rarities.

In silence they took their way back to the handsomer streets of Sais, without noticing how many mutilated Egyptians crossed their path. These poor disfigured creatures were indeed no unusual sight for Asiatics, who punished many crimes by the amputation of a limb. Had they enquired however, they would have heard that, in Egypt, the man deprived of his

hand was a convicted forger, the woman of her nose, an adulteress; that the man without a tongue had been found guilty of high treason or false witness; that the loss of the ears denoted a spy, and that the pale, idiotic-looking woman yonder had been guilty of infanticide, and had been condemned to hold the little corpse three days and three nights in her arms. What woman could retain her senses after these hours of torture?[167]

The greater number of the Egyptian penal laws not only secured the punishment of the criminal, but rendered a repetition of the offence impossible.

The Persian party now met with a hindrance, a large crowd having assembled before one of the handsomest houses in the street leading to the temple of Neith. The few windows of this house that could be seen (the greater number opening on the garden and court) were closed with shutters, and at the door stood an old man, dressed in the plain white robe of a priest's servant. He was endeavoring, with loud cries, to prevent a number of men of his own class from carrying a large chest out of the house.

"What right have you to rob my master?" he shrieked indignantly. "I am the guardian of this house, and when my master left for Persia (may the gods destroy that land!) he bade me take especial care of this chest in which his manuscripts lay."

"Compose yourself, old Hib!" shouted one of these inferior priests, the same whose acquaintance we made on the arrival of the Asiatic Embassy. "We are here in the name of the high-priest of the great Neith, your master's master. There must be queer papers in this

167. Diodorus I. 77.

box, or Neithotep would not have honored us with his commands to fetch them."

"But I will not allow my master's papers to be stolen," shrieked the old man. "My master is the great physician Nebenchari, and I will secure his rights, even if I must appeal to the king himself."

"There," cried the other, "that will do; out with the chest, you fellows. Carry it at once to the high-priest; and you, old man, would do more wisely to hold your tongue and remember that the high-priest is your master as well as mine. Get into the house as quick as you can, or to-morrow we shall have to drag you off as we did the chest to-day!" So saying, he slammed the heavy door, the old man was flung backward into the house and the crowd saw him no more.

The Persians had watched this scene and obtained an explanation of its meaning from their interpreter.

Zopyrus laughed on hearing that the possessor of the stolen chest was the oculist Nebenchari, the same who had been sent to Persia to restore the sight of the king's mother, and whose grave, even morose temper had procured him but little love at the court of Cambyses.

Bartja wished to ask Amasis the meaning of this strange robbery, but Gyges begged him not to interfere in matters with which he had no concern. Just as they reached the palace, and darkness, which in Egypt so quickly succeeds the daylight, was already stealing over the city, Gyges felt himself hindered from proceeding further by a firm hand on his robe, and perceived a stranger holding his finger on his lips in token of silence.

"When can I speak with you alone and unobserved?" he whispered.

"What do you wish from me?"

"Ask no questions, but answer me quickly. By Mithras,[168] I have weighty matters to disclose."

"You speak Persian, but your garments would proclaim you an Egyptian."

"I am a Persian, but answer me quickly or we shall be noticed. When can I speak to you alone?"

"To-morrow morning."

"That is too late."

"Well then, in a quarter of an hour, when it is quite dark, at this gate of the palace."

"I shall expect you."

So saying the man vanished. Once within the palace, Gyges left Bartja and Zopyrus, fastened his sword into his girdle, begged Darius to do the same and to follow him, and was soon standing again under the great portico with the stranger, but this time in total darkness.

"Auramazda be praised that you are there!" cried the latter in Persian to the young Lydian; "but who is that with you?"

"Darius, the son of Hystaspes, one of the Achæmenidæ,[169] and my friend."

The stranger bowed low and answered, "It is well, I feared an Egyptian had accompanied you."

"No, we are alone and willing to hear you; but be brief. Who are you and what do you want?"

"My name is Bubares. I served as a poor captain

168. Oaths sworn in the name of Mithras, the god of the sun, were held specially sacred among the Persians. *Vendid. Farg.* IV 36. *Spiegel, Avesta. p.* 94.

169. Achæmenidæ was the name given to the kings of Persia descended from Achæmenes, and to the nobles related to them by birth. In the cuneiform character, inscription of *Behistán* I. 2. the name is "Hakhâmanis."

under the great Cyrus. At the taking of your father's city, Sardis, the soldiers were at first allowed to plunder freely; but on your wise father's representing to Cyrus that to plunder a city already taken was an injury to the present, and not to the former, possessor,[170] they were commanded on pain of death to deliver up their booty to their captains, and the latter to cause everything of worth, when brought to them, to be collected in the market-place. Gold and silver trappings lay there in abundance, costly articles of attire studded with precious stones . . ."

"Quick, quick, our time is short," interrupted Gyges.

"You are right. I must be more brief. By keeping for myself an ointment-box sparkling with jewels, taken from your father's palace, I forfeited my life. Crœsus, however, pleaded for me with his conqueror Cyrus; my life and liberty were granted me, but I was declared a dishonored man. Life in Persia became impossible with disgrace lying heavily on my soul; I took ship from Smyrna to Cyprus, entered the army there, fought against Amasis, and was brought hither by Phanes as a prisoner-of-war. Having always served as a horse-soldier, I was placed among those slaves who had charge of the king's horses, and in six years became an overseer. Never have I forgotten the debt of gratitude I owe to your father; and now my turn has come to render him a service."

"The matter concerns my father? then speak—tell me, I beseech you!"

"Immediately. Has Crœsus offended the crown-prince?"

170. *Herod.* I. 88.

"Not that I am aware of."

"Your father is on a visit to Rhodopis this evening, at Naukratis?"

"How did you hear this?"

"From himself. I followed him to the boat this morning and sought to cast myself at his feet."

"And did you succeed?"

"Certainly. He spoke a few gracious words with me, but could not wait to hear what I would say, as his companions were already on board when he arrived. His slave Sandon, whom I know, told me that they were going to Naukratis, and would visit the Greek woman whom they call Rhodopis."

"He spoke truly."

"Then you must speed to the rescue. At the time that the market-place was full,[171] ten carriages and two boats, full of Ethiopian soldiers under the command of an Egyptian captain, were sent off to Naukratis to surround the house of Rhodopis and make captives of her guests."

"Ha, treachery!" exclaimed Gyges.

"But how can they wish to injure your father?" said Darius. "They know that the vengeance of Cambyses——"

"I only know," repeated Bubares, "that this night the house of Rhodopis, in which your father is, will be

171. The forenoon among the Greeks was regulated by the business of the market. πλήθουσα ἀγορά, περὶ πλήθουσαν ἀγοράν,—πληθώσῃ ἀγορᾶς. *Herod.* II. 173. VII. 223. διάλυδις ἀγορᾶς (*Xenoph. Oecon.* 12. 1.) "When the market-place begins to fill, when it is full, when it becomes empty." It would be impossible to define this division of time exactly according to our modern methods of computation, but it seems certain that the market was over by the afternoon. The busiest hours were probably from 10 till 1. At the present day the streets of Athens are crowded during those hours; but in Summer from two to four o'clock are utterly deserted. I owe this information to Dr. Steitz.

surrounded by Ethiopian soldiers. I myself saw to the horses which transport them thither and heard Pentaur, one of the crown-prince's fan-bearers, call to them, 'Keep eyes and ears open, and let the house of Rhodopis be surrounded, lest he should escape by the back door. If possible spare his life, and kill him only if he resist. Bring him alive to Sais, and you shall receive twenty rings of gold.'" [172]

"But could that allude to my father?"

"Certainly not," cried Darius.

"It is impossible to say," murmured Bubares. "In this country one can never know what may happen."

"How long does it take for a good horse to reach Naukratis?"

"Three hours, if he can go so long, and the Nile has not overflowed the road too much."

"I will be there in two."

"I shall ride with you," said Darius.

"No, you must remain here with Zopyrus for Bartja's protection. Tell the servants to get ready."

"But Gyges——"

"Yes, you will stay here and excuse me to Amasis. Say I could not come to the evening revel on account of headache, toothache, sickness, anything you like.

172. It is no longer a matter of question, that before the time of the Persians, and therefore at this point of our history, no money had been coined in Egypt. The precious metals were weighed out and used as money in the shape of rings, animals, etc. On many of the monuments we see people purchasing goods and weighing out the gold in payment; while others are paying their tribute in gold rings. These rings were in use as a medium of payment up to the time of the Ptolemies. Pliny XXXIII. 1. Balances with weights in the form of animals may be seen in Wilkinson II. p. 10. During the reigns of the Ptolemies many coins were struck, numerous beautiful specimens of which have been given in our "*Aegypten in Bild und Wort.*" Some of the Egyptian weights and the value assigned to them are known at the present day.

I shall ride Bartja's Nicæan horse; and you, Bubares, will follow me on Darius's. You will lend him, my brother?"

"If I had ten thousand, you should have them all."

"Do you know the way to Naukratis, Bubares?"

"Blindfold."

"Then go, Darius, and tell them to get your horse and Bartja's ready! To linger would be sin. Farewell Darius, perhaps for ever! Protect Bartja! Once more, farewell!"

CHAPTER VIII.

It wanted two hours of midnight. Bright light was streaming through the open windows of Rhodopis' house, and sounds of mirth and gaiety fell on the ear. Her table had been adorned with special care in Crœsus' honor.

On the cushions around it lay the guests with whom we are already acquainted: Theodorus, Ibykus, Phanes, Aristomachus, the merchant Theopompus of Miletus, Crœsus and others, crowned with chaplets of poplar and roses.

Theodorus the sculptor was speaking: "Egypt seems to me," he said, "like a girl who persists in wearing a tight and painful shoe only because it is of gold, while within her reach lie beautiful and well-fitting slippers in which she could move at ease, if she only would."

"You refer to the Egyptians' pertinacity in retaining traditional forms and customs?" asked Crœsus.

"Certainly I do," answered the sculptor. "Two

centuries ago Egypt was unquestionably the first of the nations. In Art and Science she far excelled us; but we learnt their methods of working, improved on them, held firm to no prescribed proportions, but to the natural types alone, gave freedom and beauty to their unbending outlines,* and now have left our masters far behind us. But how was this possible? simply because the Egyptians, bound by unalterable laws, *could* make no progress; we, on the contrary, were free to pursue our course in the wide arena of art as far as will and power would allow."

"But how can an artist be compelled to fashion statues alike, which are meant to differ from each other in what they represent?"

"In this case that can be easily explained. The entire human body is divided by the Egyptians into 21¼ parts,[173] in accordance with which division the proportion of each separate limb is regulated. I, myself, have laid a wager with Amasis, in presence of the first Egyptian sculptor, (a priest of Thebes), that, if I send my brother Telekles, in Ephesus, dimensions, proportion and attitude, according to the Egyptian method, he and I together can produce a statue which shall look as if sculptured from one block and by one hand, though

173. These numbers, and the story which immediately follows, are taken from Diodorus I. 98. Plato tells us that, in his time, a law existed binding the Egyptian artists to execute their works with exactly the same amount of beauty or its reverse, as those which had been made more than a thousand years before. This statement is confirmed by the monuments; but any one well acquainted with Egyptian art can discern a marked difference in the style of each epoch. At the time of the ancient kingdom the forms were compressed and stunted; under Seti I. beauty of proportion reached its highest point. During, and after the 20th dynasty, the style declined in beauty; in the 26th, under the descendants of Psammetichus, we meet with a last revival of art, but the ancient purity of form was never again attained,

* See note 26.

Telekles is to carve the lower half at Ephesus, and I the upper here in Sais, and under the eye of Amasis."

"And shall you win your wager?"

"Undoubtedly. I am just going to begin this trick of art; it will as little deserve the name of a work of art, as any Egyptian statue."

"And yet there are single sculptures here which are of exquisite workmanship; such, for instance, as the one Amasis sent to Samos as a present to Polykrates. In Memphis I saw a statue said to be about three thousand years old, and to represent a king[174] who built the great Pyramid, which excited my admiration in every respect. With what certainty and precision that unusually hard stone has been wrought! the muscles, how carefully carved! especially in the breast, legs and feet; the harmony of the features too, and, above all, the polish of the whole, leave nothing to be desired."

"Unquestionably. In all the mechanism of art, such as precision and certainty in working even the hardest materials, the Egyptians, though they have so long stood still in other points, are still far before us; but to model form with freedom, to breathe, like Prometheus, a soul into the stone, they will never learn until their old notions on this subject have been entirely abandoned. Even the pleasing varieties of corporeal life cannot be represented by a system of mere propor-

174. These wooden statues represented the king himself. Herod. II. 182. A considerable number of portrait-statues have come down to us. As a proof of the height which art in Egypt had reached, even at so early a period as the time of the Pyramids, we need only allude to the statue of Chefren now in the Museum at Boolak, exquisitely wrought in a very hard material. At the Paris Exhibition of 1867 it excited the admiration of every beholder. The wooden statue of the so-called village magistrate, found at Sakkara, also belongs to the time of the Pyramids. In delicacy of workmanship and realistic treatment it is unsurpassed by anything in the collection.

tions, much less those which are inner and spiritual. Look at the countless statues which have been erected during the last three thousand years, in all the temples and palaces from Naukratis up to the Cataracts. They are all of one type, and represent men of middle age, with grave but benevolent countenances. Yet they are intended, some as statues of aged monarchs, others to perpetuate the memory of young princes. The warrior and the lawgiver, the blood-thirsty tyrant and the philanthropist are only distinguished from each other by a difference in size, by which the Egyptian sculptor expresses the idea of power and strength. Amasis orders a statue just as I should a sword. Breadth and length being specified, we both of us know quite well, before the master has begun his work, what we shall receive when it is finished. How could I possibly fashion an infirm old man like an eager youth? a pugilist like a runner in the foot-race? a poet like a warrior? Put Ibykus and our Spartan friend side by side, and tell me what you would say, were I to give to the stern warrior the gentle features and gestures of our heart-ensnaring poet."

"Well, and how does Amasis answer your remarks on this stagnation in art?"

"He deplores it; but does not feel himself strong enough to abolish the restrictive laws of the priests."

"And yet," said the Delphian, "he has given a large sum towards the embellishment of our new temple, expressly, (I use his own words) for the promotion of Hellenic art!"

"That is admirable in him," exclaimed Crœsus. "Will the Alkmæonidæ soon have collected the three hundred talents* necessary for the completion of the

* £67,500.

temple?[175] Were I as rich as formerly I would gladly undertake the entire cost; notwithstanding that your malicious god so cruelly deceived me, after all my offerings at his shrine. For when I sent to ask whether I should begin the war with Cyrus, he returned this answer: I should destroy a mighty kingdom by crossing the river Halys.[176] I trusted the god, secured the friendship of Sparta according to his commands, crossed the boundary stream, and, in so doing, did indeed destroy a mighty kingdom; not however that of the Medes and Persians, but my own poor Lydia, which, as a satrapy of Cambyses, finds its loss of independence a hard and uncongenial yoke."

"You blame the god unjustly," answered Phryxus. "It cannot be his fault that you, in your human conceit, should have misinterpreted his oracle. The answer did not say 'the kingdom of Persia,' but 'a kingdom' should be destroyed through your desire for war. Why did you not enquire what kingdom was meant? Was not your son's fate truly prophesied by the oracle? and also that on the day of misfortune he would regain his speech? And when, after the fall of Sardis, Cyrus granted your wish to enquire at Delphi whether the Greek gods made a rule of requiting their benefactors by ingratitude, Loxias answered that he had willed the best for you, but was controlled by a mightier power than himself, by that inexorable fate which had foretold

175. The noble Attic family of the Alkmæonidæ, after having been driven from Athens by Pisistratus, undertook to rebuild the temple at Delphi. A fourth of the money required for the work was to be procured by the Delphians themselves, who also made collections in Egypt, and are said to have obtained a considerable sum there. Herod. II. 180.

176. Herod. I. 53. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VII. 2.

to thy great ancestor,[177] that his fifth successor was doomed to destruction."

"In the first days of my adversity I needed those words far more than now," interrupted Crœsus. "There was a time when I cursed your god and his oracles; but later, when with my riches my flatterers had left me, and I became accustomed to pronounce judgment on my own actions, I saw clearly that not Apollo, but my own vanity had been the cause of my ruin. How could 'the kingdom to be destroyed' possibly mean mine, the mighty realm of the powerful Crœsus, the friend of the gods, the hitherto unconquered leader? Had a friend hinted at this interpretation of the ambiguous oracle, I should have derided, nay, probably caused him to be punished. For a despotic ruler is like a fiery steed; the latter endeavors to kick him who touches his wounds with intent to heal; the former punishes him who lays a hand on the weak or failing points of his diseased mind. Thus I missed what, if my eyes had not been dazzled, I might easily have seen; and now that my vision is clearer, though I have nothing to lose, I am far more often anxious than in the days when none could possibly lose more than I. In comparison with those days, Phryxus, I may be called a poor man now, but Cambyses does not leave me to famish, and I can still raise a talent[178] for your temple."

Phryxus expressed his thanks, and Phanes remarked: "The Alkmæonidæ will be sure to erect a beautiful edifice, for they are rich and ambitious, and desirous of

177. Kandaules, who received the answer mentioned in the text from the oracle, had murdered Gyges, king of Lydia, and thus obtained possession of the throne. Herod. I. 8. 91.

178. The ancient Attic talent of silver was worth £225, according to Böckh, *Staatshaushaltung der Athener* I. 25. The Mina was worth £3. 15. the drachma about 7*d*. and the obolus a little more than 1*d*.

gaining favor with the Amphiktyons, in order, by their aid, to overthrow the tyrants, secure to themselves a higher position than that of the family to which I belong, and with this, the guidance of state-affairs."

"Is it true, as people say," asked Ibykus, "that next to Agarista[179] with whom Megakles received so rich a dowry, you, Crœsus, have been the largest contributor to the wealth of the Alkmæonidæ?"

"True enough," answered Crœsus laughing.

"Tell us the story, I beg," said Rhodopis.

"Well," answered Crœsus, "Alkmæon of Athens once appeared at my court;[180] his cheerfulness and cultivation pleased me well, and I retained him near me for some time. One day I showed him my treasure-chambers, at the sight of which he fell into despair, called himself a common beggar and declared that one good handful of these precious things would make him a happy man. I at once allowed him to take as much gold away as he could carry. What think you did Alkmæon on this? sent for high Lydian riding-boots, an apron and a basket, had the one secured behind him, put the others on, and filled them all with gold, till they could hold no more. Not content with this, he strewed gold-dust in his hair and beard and filled his mouth to that extent that he appeared in the act of choking. In each hand he grasped a golden dish, and thus laden dragged himself out of the treasure-house, falling exhausted as he crossed the threshold. Never have I laughed so heartily as at this sight."

179. Agarista was the wealthy heiress of Klisthenes of Sicyon, and wife of Megakles, one of the Alkmæonidæ. Herod. VI. 126—130. Diod. VII. 19. Pherecydes *fr.* 20. Müller.

180. Herod. VI. 125.

"But did you grant him all these treasures?" said Rhodopis.

"Yes, yes, my friend; and did not think even then, that I had paid too dearly for the experience that gold can make fools even of clever men."

"You were the most generous of monarchs," cried Phanes.

"And make a tolerably contented beggar," answered Crœsus. "But tell me, Phryxus, how much has Amasis contributed to your collection?"

"He gave fifty tons of alum."[181]

"A royal gift!"

"And the prince Psamtik?"

"On my appealing to him by his father's munificence, he turned his back on me, and answered with a bitter laugh: 'Collect money for the destruction of your temple, and I am ready to double my father's donation!'"

"The wretch!"

"Say rather: the true Egyptian! to Psamtik everything foreign is an abomination."

"How much have the Greeks in Naukratis contributed?"

"Beside munificent private donations, each community[182] has given twenty minæ." *

"That is much."

"Philoinus, the Sybarite, alone sent me a thousand drachmæ,** and accompanied his gift with a

181. Herod. II. 180.

182. See note 175. Herod II. 180. It might be understood from this passage, that the sum of 20 Minæ, or £75, had been contributed by the entire Greek colony in Naukratis. But as this would have been far too small a sum for so considerable a place, and yet, (in Valla's opinion) too much for each individual citizen, we can only assume that Herodotus is speaking of the different communities of which the colony was composed.

* £75. ** See note 178. £37.10.

most singular epistle. May I read it aloud, Rhodopis?"

"Certainly, answered she. "It will show you that the drunkard has repented of his late behaviour."

The Delphian began: "Philoinus to Phryxus: It grieves me that at Rhodopis' house the other night I did not drink *more;* for had I done so I should have lost consciousness entirely, and so have been unable to offend even the smallest insect. My confounded abstemiousness is therefore to blame, that I can no longer enjoy a place at the best table in all Egypt. I am thankful, however, to Rhodopis for past enjoyment, and in memory of her glorious roastbeef (which has bred in me the wish to buy her cook at any price) I send twelve large spits for roasting oxen,[183] and beg they may be placed in some treasure-house at Delphi as an offering from Rhodopis. As for myself, being a rich man, I sign my name for a thousand drachmæ, and beg that my gift may be publicly announced at the next Pythian games. To that rude fellow, Aristomachus of Sparta, express my thanks for the effectual manner in which he fulfilled my intention in coming to Egypt. I came hither for the purpose of having a tooth extracted by an Egyptian dentist[184] said to take out teeth without causing much pain. Aristomachus, however, knocked out the defective tooth and so saved me from an operation, the thought of which had often made me tremble. On recovering consciousness, I found that three teeth

183. Rhodopis is said to have sent such a gift to Delphi. Herod. II. 135.

184. The Egyptian dentists must have been very skilful. Artificial teeth have been discovered in the jaws of mummies. See Blumenbach on the teeth of the ancient Egyptians, and on mummies. *Göttinger Magazin* 1780. I. 115. In the Papyrus Ebers, prescriptions are given for various diseases of the teeth. Taf. 72.

had been knocked into my mouth, the diseased one and two others, which though healthy, would probably at some future time have caused me pain. Salute Rhodopis and the handsome Phanes from me. You I invite to an entertainment at my house in Sybaris, this day year.[185] We are accustomed to issue invitations somewhat early, on account of my necessary preparations. I have caused this epistle to be written by my slave Sophotatus in an adjoining chamber, as merely to behold the labor of writing causes cramp in my fingers."

A burst of laughter arose at these words, but Rhodopis said: "This letter gives me pleasure; it proves that Philoinus is not bad at heart. Brought up a Sybarite" . . . , She was suddenly interrupted by the voice of a stranger, who had entered unperceived, and, after apologizing to the venerable hostess and her guests for appearing without invitation among them, continued thus: "I am Gyges the son of Crœsus; and it has not been merely for pastime, that I have ridden over from Sais in two hours lest I should arrive too late!"

"Menon, a cushion for our guest!" cried Rhodopis. "Be welcome to my house and take some repose after your wild, thoroughly Lydian, ride."

"By the dog,[186] Gyges!" exclaimed Crœsus, "what brings thee here at this hour? I begged thee not to quit Bartja's side . . . But how thou look'st! what is the matter? has aught happened? speak, speak!"

In the first moment Gyges could not answer a word. To see his beloved father, for whose very life he had been in such anxiety, a safe and happy guest at this

185. Athen. XII. 20. Plut. *sept. sap. p.* 147.

186. "*νὴ τὸν κύνα.*" An oath of Rhadamanthus used in order to avoid mentioning the names of the gods. *Schol. Aristoph. Aves.* 520.

rich banquet, seemed to rob him of his speech a second time. At last, however, he was able to say: "The gods be praised, my father, that I see thee safe once more! Think not I forsook my post thoughtlessly. Alas! I am forced to appear as a bird of evil omen in this cheerful assembly. Know at once, ye guests, for I dare not lose time in preparing my words, that a treacherous assault awaits ye!"

They all sprang up as if struck by lightning. Aristomachus silently loosened his sword in its scabbard; Phanes extended his arms as if to discern whether the old athletic elasticity still dwelt there.

"What can it be? what is their design?" echoed from all sides.

"This house is surrounded by Ethiopian soldiers!" answered Gyges. "A faithful fellow confided to me that the crown-prince had designs on one of your number; he was to be taken alive if possible, but killed if he resisted. Dreading lest thou shouldst be this victim, my father, I sped hither. The fellow had not lied. This house *is* surrounded. My horse shied on reaching your garden-gate, Rhodopis, jaded as he was. I dismounted, and could discern behind every bush the glitter of weapons and the eager eyes of men lying in ambush. They allowed us, however, to enter unmolested."

At this moment Knakias rushed in crying, "Important news! On my way to the Nile to fetch water with which to prepare the wine-cup,[187] I have just met a man who, in his haste, nearly ran over me. It

187. The water of the Nile has a very agreeable flavor. It is called by one traveller the champagne among the waters. The ladies of the Sultan's harem send for this water even from Constantinople, and the Arabs say, that if Mahomet had drunk thereof he would have desired to live for ever.

was an Ethiop, one of Phanes' boatmen, and he tells that just as he sprang out of the boat to bathe, a royal bark came alongside and a soldier asked the rest of the crew in whose service they were. On the helmsman answering, 'in Phanes' service,' the royal boat passed on slowly. He, however, (the rower who was bathing), seated himself in fun on the rudder of the royal boat, and heard one Ethiopian soldier on board say to another, 'Keep that craft well in sight; now we know where the bird sits, and it will be easy to catch him. Remember, Psamtik has promised us fifty gold rings if we bring the Athenian to Sais dead or alive.' This is the report of Sebek, who has been in your service seven years, O Phanes."

To both these accounts Phanes listened calmly.

Rhodopis trembled. Aristomachus exclaimed, "Not a hair of your head shall be touched, if Egypt perish for it!" Crœsus advised prudence. A tremendous excitement had mastered the whole party.

At last Phanes broke silence, saying: "Reflection is never more necessary than in a time of danger. I have thought the matter over, and see clearly that escape will be difficult. The Egyptians will try to get rid of me quietly. They know that I intend going on board a Phocœan trireme, which sets sail for Sigeum at a very early hour to-morrow morning, and have therefore no time to lose, if they will seize me. Your garden, Rhodopis, is entirely surrounded, and were I to remain here, your house would no longer be respected as a sanctuary; it would be searched and I taken in it. There can be no doubt that a watch has been set over the Phocœan ship also. Blood shall not be shed in vain on my account."

"But you dare not surrender!" cried Aristomachus.

"No, no, I have a plan," shouted Theopompus the Milesian merchant. "At sunrise to-morrow a ship sails for Miletus laden with Egyptian corn, but not from Naukratis, from Canopus. Take the noble Persian's horse and ride thither. We will cut a way for you through the garden."

"But," said Gyges, "our little band is not strong enough to carry out such an attempt. We number in all ten men, and of these only three have swords; our enemies, on the other hand, number at least a hundred, and are armed to the teeth."

"Lydian!" cried Aristomachus, "wert thou ten times more fainthearted than thou art, and were our enemies double their number, I at least, will fight them!"

Phanes grasped his friend's hand. Gyges turned pale. This brave warrior had called him fainthearted; and again he could find no words to answer; for at every stirring emotion his tongue failed him. Suddenly the blood mounted to his face; his words came quickly and with decision: "Athenian, follow me! and thou, Spartan, who art not wont to use words heedlessly, call no man fainthearted again before thou knowest him. Friends, Phanes is safe, Farewell, father!"

The remaining guests surveyed these two departing men in silent wonder. As they stood there, silently listening, the sound of two horses galloping swiftly away fell on their ear, and after a longer interval a prolonged whistle from the Nile and a cry of distress.

"Where is Knakias?" said Rhodopis to one of her slaves.

"He went into the garden with Phanes and the

Persian," was the answer, and as it was being spoken, the old slave re-entered, pale and trembling.

"Have you seen my son?" cried Crœsus.

"Where is Phanes?"

"I was to bid you farewell from them both."

"Then they are gone.—Whither? How was it possible?" . . .

"The Athenian and the Persian," began the slave, "had a slight dispute in the anteroom. This over, I was told to divest both of their robes. Phanes then put on the stranger's trousers, coat and girdle; on his own curls he placed the pointed Persian cap. The stranger wrapped himself in the Athenian's chiton and mantle, placed the golden circlet above his brow, caused the hair to be shaved from his upper lip, and ordered me to follow him into the garden. Phanes, whom in his present dress, none could imagine to be other than a Persian, mounted one of the horses still waiting before the gate; the stranger called after him, 'Farewell Gyges, farewell beloved Persian, a pleasant journey to thee, Gyges!' The servant, who had been waiting, followed on the other horse. I could hear the clatter of arms among the bushes, but the Athenian was allowed to depart unmolested, the soldiers, without doubt, believing him to be a Persian.

"On returning to the house the stranger's orders were: 'Accompany me to Phanes' bark, and cease not to call me by the Athenian's name.' 'But the boatmen will betray you,' I said. 'Then go alone to them,' he answered, 'and command them to receive me as their master, Phanes.' Then I prayed him to allow me to take the dress of the fugitive and become a prey to the pursuers; but he would by no means allow this, and

said my gait and carriage would betray me. There alas! he spoke truly, for only the free man can walk erect; the neck of the slave is bent; the schools in which the noble and the freeborn learn grace and beauty of movement are not for him. And so it must remain, the children must be even as the fathers; can the unclean onion-root produce a rose, or the unsightly radish a hyacinth?[188] Constant bondage bows the neck of the slave, but the consciousness of freedom gives dignity to the stature."

"But what has become of my son?" interrupted Crœsus.

"He would not accept my poor offer, and took his seat in the bark, sending a thousand greetings unto thee, O king! I cried after him, 'Farewell Phanes! I wish thee a prosperous journey, Phanes!' At that moment a cloud crossed the moon; and from out the thick darkness I heard screams, and cries for help; they did not, however, last long, a shrill whistle followed, then all was silent; and the measured strokes of oars were the only sounds that fell on my ear. I was on the point of returning to relate what I had seen, when the boatman Sebek swam up once more and told as follows: The Egyptians had caused a leak to be made in Phanes' boat, and at a short distance from land it had filled and began to sink. On the boatmen crying for help, the royal bark, which was following, had come up and taken the supposed Phanes on board, but had prevented the rowers from leaving their benches. They all went down with the leaking boat, the daring Sebek alone excepted. Gyges is on board the royal boat; Phanes has escaped,

188. From some verses by Theognis of Megara, IV. 62. died 480 B. C.

for that whistle must have been intended for the soldiers in ambush at the garden-gate. I searched the bushes, the soldiers were gone, and I could hear the sound of their voices and weapons on their way back to Sais."

The guests listened with eager attention to this tale. At its close a mingled feeling of relief and anxiety was felt by all; relief that their favorite companion had escaped so fearful a danger, anxiety for the brave young Lydian who had risked his life to save him. They praised his generosity, congratulated Crœsus on possessing such a son, and finally agreed in the conclusion, that, when the crown-prince discovered the error into which his emissaries had fallen, he must certainly release Gyges, and even make him compensation for what he had suffered at their hands.

The friendship already shown by Amasis, and the fear in which he evidently stood of the Persian power, were the thoughts which had power to calm Crœsus, who soon left, in order to pass the night at the house of Theopompus, the Milesian merchant. At parting, Aristomachus said: "Salute Gyges in my name; tell him I ask his forgiveness, and hope one day either to enjoy his friendship, or, if that cannot be, to meet him as a fair foe on the field of battle."

"Who knows what the future may bring?" answered Crœsus giving his hand to the Spartan.

CHAPTER IX.

THE sun of a new day had risen over Egypt, but was still low in the east; the copious dew, which, on the Nile, supplies the place of rain, lay sparkling like jewels on the leaves and blossoms, and the morning air, freshened by a north-west wind, invited those to enjoy it who could not bear the heat of mid-day.

Through the door of the country-house, now so well known to us, two female figures have just passed; Melitta, the old slave, and Sappho, the grandchild of Rhodopis.

The latter is not less lovely now, than when we saw her last, asleep. She moves through the garden with a light quick step, her white morning robe with its wide sleeves falling in graceful drapery over her lithe limbs, the thick brown hair straying from beneath the purple kerchief over her head, and a merry, roguish smile lurking round her rosy mouth and in the dimples of her cheeks and chin.

She stooped to pick a rose, dashed the dew from it into the face of her old nurse, laughing at her naughty trick till the clear bell-like tones rang through the garden; fixed the flower in her dress and began to sing in a wonderfully rich and sweet voice—

Cupid once upon a bed
Of roses laid his weary head;
Luckless urchin! not to see
Within the leaves a slumbering bee.
The bee awak'd—with anger wild
The bee awak'd, and stung the child.

Loud and piteous are his cries;
To Venus quick he runs, he flies;
"Oh mother! I am wounded through—
"I die with pain—in sooth I do!
"Stung by some little angry thing.
"Some serpent on a tiny wing,
"A bee it was—for once, I know,
"I heard a rustic call it so."*

"Isn't that a very pretty song?" asked the laughing girl. "How stupid of little Eros to mistake a bee for a winged snake! Grandmother says that the great poet Anacreon wrote another verse to this song, but she will not teach it me. Tell me, Melitta, what can there be in that verse? There, you are smiling; dear, darling Melitta, do sing me that one verse. Perhaps though, you don't know it yourself? No? then certainly you can't teach it me."

"That is a new song," answered the old woman, evading her darling's question, "I only know the songs of the good old times. But hark! did not you hear a knock at the gate?"

"Yes, of course I did, and I think the sound of horses' hoofs too. Go and see who seeks admission so early. Perhaps, after all, our kind Phanes did not go away yesterday, and has come to bid us farewell once more."

* The last lines which contain the point of this song are:

Thus he spoke, and she, the while,
Heard him with a soothing smile;
Then said, "My infant, if so much
"Thou feel the little wild bee's touch,
"How must the heart, ah! Cupid be,
"The hapless heart that's stung by thee?" 189

189. Translation from one of Anacreon's songs, the authenticity of which has, we think erroneously, been questioned. Anacreon ed. Melhorn. λγ'.

"Phanes is gone," said Melitta, becoming serious, "and Rhodopis has ordered me to send you in when visitors arrive. Go child, that I may open the gate. There, they have knocked again."

Sappho pretended to run in, but instead of obeying her nurse's orders, stopped and hid herself behind a rose-bush, hoping to catch sight of these early guests. In the fear of needlessly distressing her, she had not been told of the events of the previous evening, and at this early hour could only expect to see some very intimate friend of her grandmother's.

Melitta opened the gate and admitted a youth splendidly apparelled, and with fair curling hair.

It was Bartja, and Sappho was so lost in wonder at his beauty, and the Persian dress, to her so strange, that she remained motionless in her hiding-place, her eyes fixed on his face. Just so she had pictured to herself Apollo with the beautiful locks, guiding the sun-chariot.

As Melitta and the stranger came nearer she thrust her little head through the roses to hear what the handsome youth was saying so kindly in his broken Greek.

She heard him ask hurriedly after Crœsus and his son; and then, from Melitta's answer, she gathered all that had passed the evening before, trembled for Phanes, felt so thankful to the generous Gyges, and again wondered who this youth in royal apparel could possibly be. Rhodopis had told her about Cyrus's heroic deeds, the fall of Crœsus and the power and wealth of the Persians, but still she had always fancied them a wild, uncultivated people. Now, however. her interest in Persia increased with every look at the handsome Bartja. At last Melitta went in to wake her grandmother and announce the

guest, and Sappho tried to follow her, but Eros, the foolish boy whose ignorance she had been mocking a moment before, had other intentions. Her dress caught in the thorns, and before she could disengage it, the beautiful Bartja was standing before her, helping her to get free from the treacherous bush.

Sappho could not speak a word even of thanks; she blushed deeply, and stood smiling and ashamed, with downcast eyes.

Bartja, too, generally so full of fun and spirit, looked down at her without speaking, the color mounting to his cheeks.

The silence, however, did not last long, for Sappho, recovering from her fright, burst into a laugh of childish delight at the silent stranger and the odd scene, and fled towards the house like a timid fawn.

In a moment Bartja was himself again; in two strides he reached the young girl, quick as thought seized her hand and held it fast, notwithstanding all her struggles.

"Let me go!" she cried half in earnest and half laughing, raising her dark eyes appealingly to him.

"Why should I?" he answered. "I took you from the rose-bush and shall hold you fast until you give me your sister there, the other rose, from your bosom, to take home with me as a keepsake."

"Please let me go," repeated Sappho, "I will promise nothing unless you let my hand go."

"But if I do, you will not run away again?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, then, I will give you your liberty, but now you must give me your rose."

"There are plenty on the bush yonder, and more

beautiful ones; choose whichever you like. Why do you want just this one?"

"To keep it carefully in remembrance of the most beautiful maiden I ever saw."

"Then I shall certainly not give it to you; for those are not my real friends who tell me I am beautiful, only those who tell me I am good."

"Where did you learn that?"

"From my grandmother Rhodopis."

"Very well, then I will tell you you are better than any other maiden in the whole world."

"How can you say such things, when you don't know me at all? Oh, sometimes I am very naughty and disobedient. If I were really good I should be indoors now instead of talking to you here. My grandmother has forbidden me ever to stay in the garden when visitors are here, and indeed I don't care for all those strange men who always talk about things I cannot understand."

"Then perhaps you would like me to go away too?"

"Oh no, I can understand you quite well; though you cannot speak half so beautifully as our poor Phanes for example, who was obliged to escape so miserably yesterday evening, as I heard Melitta saying just this minute."

"Did you love Phanes?"

"Love him? Oh yes,—I was very fond of him. When I was little he always brought me balls, dolls ninepins[190] from Memphis and Sais; and now that I am older he teaches me beautiful new songs. As a parting

190. Jointed dolls for children. Wilkinson II. 427. *Note* 149. In the Leyden Museum one of these jointed toys is to be seen, in very good preservation.

gift he brought me a tiny Sicilian lapdog,[191] which I am going to call Argos,[192] because he is so white and swift-footed. But in a few days we are to have another present from the good Phanes, for . . . There, now you can see what I am; I was just going to let out a great secret. My grandmother has strictly forbidden me to tell any one what dear little visitors we are expecting; but I feel as if I had known you a long time already, and you have such kind eyes that I could tell you everything. You see, when I am very happy, I have no one in the whole world to talk to about it, except old Melitta and my grandmother, and, I don't know how it is, that, though they love me so much, they sometimes cannot understand how trifles can make me so happy."

"That is because they are old, and have forgotten what made them happy in their youth. But have you no companions of your own age that you are fond of?"

"Not one. Of course there are many other young girls beside me in Naukratis, but my grandmother says I am not to seek their acquaintance, and if they will not come to us I am not to go to them."

"Poor child! if you were in Persia, I could soon find you a friend. I have a sister called Atossa, who is young and good, like you."

"Oh, what a pity that she did not come here with you!—But now you must tell me your name."

"My name is Bartja."

"Bartja! that is a strange name! Bartja—Bartja. Do you know, I like it. How was the son of Crœsus called, who saved our Phanes so generously?"

191. Sicilian lapdogs were much boasted of among the ancients; they appear to have been first kept by the luxurious Sybarites.

192. This was the name of the faithful dog in the Odyssey.

"Gyges. Darius, Zopyrus and he are my best friends. We have sworn never to part, and to give up our lives for one another,[193] and that is why I came to-day, so early and quite in secret, to help my friend Gyges, in case he should need me."

"Then you rode here for nothing."

"No, by Mithras, that indeed I did not, for this ride brought me to you. But now you must tell me your name."

"I am called Sappho."

"That is a pretty name, and Gyges sings me sometimes beautiful songs by a poetess called Sappho. Are you related to her?"

"Of course. She was the sister of my grandfather Charaxus, and is called the tenth muse or the Lesbian swan. I suppose then, your friend Gyges speaks Greek better than you do?"

"Yes, he learnt Greek and Lydian together as a little child, and speaks them both equally well. He can speak Persian too, perfectly; and what is more, he knows and practises all the Persian virtues."

"Which are the highest virtues then according to you Persians?"

"Truth* is the first of all; courage the second, and the third is obedience; these three, joined with veneration for the gods, have made us Persians great."

"But I thought you worshipped no gods?"

"Foolish child! who could live without a god, without a higher ruler? True, they do not dwell in houses

193. The Persians, even in our day, form solemn contracts of friendship. Two Persians, who wish to bind themselves as friends for the term of their lives, go together to the Mollah, declare their intention and are then solemnly blessed by him as *brader hâ* or "brothers." Brugsch, *Reise nach Persien*, I. *p*, 260.

* See note 142.

and pictures like the gods of the Egyptians, for the whole creation is their dwelling. The Divinity, who must be in every place, and must see and hear everything, cannot be confined within walls." [194]

"Where do you pray then and offer sacrifice, if you have no temples?"

"On the grandest of all altars, nature herself; our favorite altar is the summit of a mountain.[195] There we are nearest to our own god, Mithras, the mighty sun, and to Auramazda, the pure creative light; for there the light lingers latest and returns earliest. Light alone

194. From Herodotus (I. 131. and 132.), and from many other sources, we see clearly that at the time of the Achæmenidæ the Persians had neither temples nor images of their gods. Auramazda and Angramainjus, the principles of good and evil, were invisible existences filling all creation with their countless train of good and evil spirits. Eternity created fire and water. From these Ormusd (Auramazda), the good spirit, took his origin. He was brilliant as the light, pure and good. After having, in the course of 12000 years, created heaven, paradise and the stars, he became aware of the existence of an evil spirit, Ahriman (Angramainjus), black, unclean, malicious and emitting an evil odor. Ormusd determined on his destruction, and a fierce strife began, in which Ormusd was the victor, and the evil spirit lay 3000 years unconscious from the effects of terror. During this interval Ormusd created the sky, the waters, the earth, all useful plants, trees and herbs, the ox and the first pair of human beings in one year. Ahriman, after this, broke loose, and was overcome but not slain. As, after death, the four elements of which all things are composed, Earth, Air, Fire and Water, become reunited with their primitive elements; and as, at the resurrection-day, everything that has been severed combines once more, and nothing returns into oblivion, all is reunited to its primitive elements, Ahriman could only have been slain if his impurity could have been transmuted into purity, his darkness into light. And so evil continued to exist, and to produce impurity and evil wherever and whenever the good spirit created the pure and good. This strife must continue until the last day; but then Ahriman, too, will become pure and holy; the Diws or Dæwa (evil spirits) will have absorbed his evil, and themselves have ceased to exist. For the evil spirits which dwell in every human being, and are emanations from Ahriman, will be destroyed in the punishment inflicted on men after death. From Vuller's *Ulmai Islam* and the *Zend-Avesta*.

195. To this day the fire-altars of the Parsees are to be seen on the mountains. They are allowed to pray whenever fire and water are near at hand. Spiegel, *Avesta, Einleitung* LI. Herodotus (I. 132.) mentions also that the Persians worshipped in the open air.

is pure and good; darkness is unclean and evil. Yes, maiden, believe me, God is nearest to us on the mountains; they are his favorite resting-place. Have you never stood on the wooded summit of a high mountain, and felt, amid the solemn silence of nature, the still and soft, but awful breath of Divinity hovering around you? Have you prostrated yourself in the green forest, by a pure spring, or beneath the open sky, and listened for the voice of God speaking from among the leaves and waters? Have you beheld the flame leaping up to its parent the sun, and bearing with it, in the rising column of smoke, our prayers to the radiant Creator? You listen now in wonder, but I tell you, you would kneel and worship too with me, could I but take you to one of our mountain-altars."

"Oh! if I only could go there with you! if I might only once look down from some high mountain over all the woods and meadows, rivers and valleys. I think, up there, where nothing could be hidden from my eyes, I should feel like an all-seeing Divinity myself. But hark, my grandmother is calling. I must go."

"Oh, do not leave me yet!"

"Is not obedience one of the Persian virtues?"

"But my rose?"

"Here it is."

"Shall you remember me?"

"Why should I not?"

"Sweet maiden, forgive me if I ask one more favor."

"Yes, but ask it quickly, for my grandmother has just called again."

"Take my diamond star as a remembrance of this hour."

"No, I dare not."

"Oh, do, do take it. My father gave it me as a reward, the first time that I killed a bear with my own hand,[196] and it has been my dearest treasure till to-day, but now you shall have it, for you are dearer to me than anything else in the world."

Saying this, he took the chain and star from his breast, and tried to hang it round Sappho's neck. She resisted, but Bartja threw his arms round her, kissed her forehead, called her his only love, and looking down deep into the eyes of the trembling child, placed it round her neck by gentle force.

Rhodopis called a third time. Sappho broke from the young prince's embrace, and was running away, but turned once more at his earnest entreaty and the question, "When may I see you again?" and answered softly, "To-morrow morning at this rose-bush."

"Which held you fast to be my friend."

Sappho sped towards the house. Rhodopis received Bartja, and communicated to him all she knew of his friend's fate, after which the young Persian departed for Sais.

When Rhodopis visited her grandchild's bed that evening, she did not find her sleeping peacefully as usual; her lips moved, and she sighed deeply, as if disturbed by vexing dreams.

On his way back, Bartja met Darius and Zopyrus, who had followed at once on hearing of their friend's secret departure. They little guessed that instead of encountering an enemy, Bartja had met his first love.

Crœsus reached Sais a short time before the three

196. Kings were accustomed to reward noble deeds with such gifts. Herod. III. 130. VIII. 118. Plutarch *Artaxerxes* 10. 14. Xenoph. *Anab.* I. 2. Robe of honor. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 3. See also Vol. II. note 219.

friends. He went at once to the king and informed him without reserve of the events of the preceding evening. Amasis pretended much surprise at his son's conduct, assured his friend that Gyges should be released at once, and indulged in some ironical jokes at the discomfiture of Psamtik's attempt to revenge himself.

Crœsus had no sooner quitted the king than the crown-prince was announced.

CHAPTER X.

Amasis received his son with a burst of laughter, and without noticing Psamtik's pale and troubled countenance, shouted: "Did not I tell thee, that a simple Egyptian would find it no easy task to catch such a Greek fox? I would have given ten cities to have been by, when thy captive proved to be the stammering Lydian instead of the voluble Athenian."

Psamtik grew paler and paler, and trembling with rage, answered in a suppressed voice: "Is it well, my father, thus to rejoice at an affront offered to thy son? I swear, by the eternal gods, that but for Cambyses' sake that shameless Lydian had not seen the light of another day. But what is it to thee, that thy son becomes a laughing-stock to these beggarly Greeks!"

"Abuse not those who have outwitted thee."

"Outwitted! my plan was so subtly laid, that . . ."

"The finer the web, the sooner broken."

"That that intriguing Greek could not possibly have escaped, if, in violation of all established precedents,

the envoy of a foreign power had not taken it upon himself to rescue a man whom we had condemned."

"There thou art in error, my son. We are not speaking of the execution of a judicial sentence, but of the success or failure of an attempt at personal revenge."

"The agents employed were, however, commissioned by the king, and therefore the smallest satisfaction that I can demand of thee, is to solicit from Cambyses the punishment of him who has interfered in the execution of the royal decrees. In Persia, where men bow to the king's will as to the will of a god,[197] this crime will be seen in all its heinousness. The punishment of Gyges is a debt which Cambyses owes us."

"But I have no intention of demanding the payment of this debt," answered Amasis. "On the contrary, I am thankful that Phanes has escaped. Gyges has saved my soul from the guilt of shedding innocent blood, and thine from the reproach of having revenged thyself meanly on a man, to whom thy father is indebted."

"Wilt thou then conceal the whole affair from Cambyses?"

"No, I shall mention it jestingly in a letter, as my manner is, and at the same time caution him against Phanes. I shall tell him that he has barely escaped my vengeance, and will therefore certainly endeavor to stir up the power of Persia against Egypt; and shall entreat my future son-in-law to close his ears to this false accuser. Crœsus and Gyges can help us by their friendship more than Phanes can injure by his hatred."

197. See Vol. II. for further particulars on the obedience paid to the kings of Persia.

"Is this then thy final resolve? Can I expect no satisfaction?"

"None. I abide by what I have said."

"Then tremble, not alone before Phanes, but before another—before one who holds thee in his power, and who himself is in ours."

"Thou thinkest to alarm me; thou wouldst rend the bond formed only yesterday? Psamtik, Psamtik, I counsel thee to remember, that thou standest before thy father and thy king."

"And thou, forget not that I am thy son! If thou compell'st me to forget that the gods appointed thee to be my father—if I can hope for no help from thee, then I will resort to my own weapons."

"I am curious to learn what these may be."

"And I need not conceal them. Know then that the oculist Nebenchari is in our power."

Amasis turned pale.

"Before thou couldst possibly imagine that Cambyses would sue for the hand of thy daughter, thou sentest this man to the distant realm of Persia, in order to rid thyself of one who shared thy knowledge of the real descent of my, so-called, sister Nitetis. He is still there, and at a hint from the priests will disclose to Cambyses that he has been deceived, and that thou hast ventured to send him, instead of thine own, the child of thy dethroned predecessor Hophra. All Nebenchari's papers are in our possession, the most important being a letter in thine own hand promising his father, who assisted at Nitetis' birth,[198] a thousand gold rings, as an inducement to secrecy even from the priests."

198. In ancient as now in modern Egypt, midwives seem to have assisted at the birth of children. Two are named in *Exodus* I. 15.

"In whose hands are these papers?" asked Amasis in a freezing tone.

"In the hands of the priesthood."

"Who speak by thy mouth?"

"Thou hast said it."

"Repeat then thy requests."

"Entreat Cambyses to punish Gyges, and grant me free powers to pursue the escaped Phanes as it shall seem good in mine eyes."

"Is that all?"

"Bind thyself by a solemn oath to the priests, that the Greeks shall be prevented from erecting any more temples to their false gods in Egypt, and that the building of the temple to Apollo, in Memphis, shall be discontinued."

"I expected these demands. The priests have discovered a sharp weapon to wield against me. Well, I am prepared to yield to the wishes of my enemies, with whom thou hast leagued thyself, but only on two conditions. First, I insist that the letter, which I confess to have written to the father of Nebenchari in a moment of inconsideration, be restored to me. If left in the hands of thy party, it could reduce me from a king to the contemptible slave of priestly intrigue."

"That wish is reasonable. The letter shall be returned to thee, if . . ."

"Not another if! on the contrary, know that I consider thy petition for the punishment of Gyges so imprudent, that I refuse to grant it. Now leave me and appear not again before mine eyes until I summon thee! Yesterday I gained a son, only to lose him to-day.

Shiprah and Puah. If the mother were a queen, good fairies and goddesses were also present with their aid, generally a Hathor.

Rise! I demand no tokens of a love and humility, which thou hast never felt. Go to the priests when thou needest comfort and counsel, and see if they can supply a father's place. Tell Neithotep, in whose hands thou art as wax, that he has found the best means of forcing me to grant demands, which otherwise I should have refused. Hitherto I have been willing to make every sacrifice for the sake of upholding Egypt's greatness; but now, when I see that, to attain their own ends, the priests can strive to move me by the threat of treachery to their own country, I feel inclined to regard this privileged caste as a more dangerous enemy to Egypt, than even the Persians. Beware, beware! This once, having brought danger upon Egypt through my own fatherly weakness, I give way to the intrigues of my enemies; but, for the future, I swear by the great goddess Neith, that men shall see and feel I am king; the entire priesthood shall be sacrificed rather than the smallest fraction of my royal will! Silence—depart!"

The prince left, but this time a longer interval was necessary, before the king could regain even outward cheerfulness sufficient to enable him to appear before his guests.

Psamtik went at once to the commander of the native troops, ordered him to banish the Egyptian captain who had failed in executing his revengeful plans, to the quarries of Thebais,[199] and to send the Ethiopians back to their native country. He then hurried to the high-priest of Neith, to inform him how much he had been able to extort from the king.

199. A usual, but fearful punishment for great crimes. Diod. I. 78. III. 12. 14. Further particulars in the text of Vol. II. and note 139 of the same volume.

Neithotep shook his head doubtfully on hearing of Amasis' threats, and dismissed the prince with a few words of exhortation, a practice he never omitted.

Psamtik returned home, his heart oppressed and his mind clouded with a sense of unsatisfied revenge, of a new and unhappy rupture with his father, a fear of foreign derision, a feeling of his subjection to the will of the priests, and of a gloomy fate which had hung over his head since his birth.

His once beautiful wife was dead; and, of five blooming children, only one daughter remained to him, and a little son, whom he loved tenderly, and to whom in this sad moment he felt drawn. For the blue eyes and laughing mouth of his child were the only objects that ever thawed this man's icy heart, and from these he now hoped for consolation and courage on his weary road through life.

"Where is my son?" he asked of the first attendant who crossed his path.

"The king has just sent for the Prince Necho and his nurse," answered the man.

At this moment the high-steward of the prince's household approached, and with a low obeisance delivered to Psamtik a sealed papyrus letter, with the words: "From your father, the king."

In angry haste he broke the yellow wax of the seal bearing the king's name,[200] and read: "I have sent for

200. Signet rings were worn by the Egyptians at a very early period. Thus, in Genesis 41. 42., Pharaoh puts his ring on Joseph's hand. In the Berlin Museum and all other collections of Egyptian antiquities, numbers of these rings are to be found, many of which are more than 4000 years old. Wilkinson gives drawings of a series of such rings. III. p. 374. See also a drawing of the Ferlini discoveries made in Nubia and now in the Berlin Museum. Lepsius, *Denkmäler* X. Pl. 42. At the spot where this treasure was discovered in

thy son, that he may not become, like his father, a blind instrument in the hands of the priesthood, forgetful of what is due to himself and his country. His education shall be my care, for the impressions of childhood affect the whole of a man's later life. Thou canst see him if thou wilt, but I must be acquainted with thy intention beforehand."

Psamtik concealed his indignation from the surrounding attendants with difficulty. The mere wish of a royal father had, according to Egyptian custom, as much weight as the strictest command. After reflecting a few moments, he called for huntsmen, dogs, bows and lances, sprang into a light chariot[201] and commanded the charioteer to drive him to the western marshes, where, in pursuing the wild beasts of the desert, he could forget the weight of his own cares and wreak on innocent creatures his hitherto baffled vengeance.

Gyges was released immediately after the conversation between his father and Amasis, and welcomed with acclamations of joy by his companions. The Pharaoh seemed desirous of atoning for the imprison-

1830, a tradition has already arisen with respect to it. Rings have been found on the hands of many mummies.

201. Field sports seem to have been much favored by the kings of Egypt and their nobles. Not only dogs of different breeds, but wild animals, such as leopards and lions, were trained to the chase. Wilkinson III. 16. A good drawing of a lion-hunt is to be found in Rosellini, *Mon. stor.* II. *plate* 129. A lion shot by the Pharaoh lies dying near him, the arrows quivering in his body; and another wounded lion is escaping into the rushes by the water. Hunting-dogs of different kinds, see Wilkinson III. 32. and also III. 22. where wild goats, gazelles and other graminivorous animals are being hunted. Rosellini, *Mon. civ. Pl.* 15-18. Birds are being caught with nets and the boomerang. Wilkinson III. 38. 39. 41. 42. Lepsius, *Denkmäler.* Abth. II. Pl. 131. 132. Hunting-scenes from Benihassan. On one of the so-called wedding scarabei (18th dynasty) we read that the king himself killed 110 lions.

ment of his friend's son by doubling his favors, for on the same day Gyges received from the king a magnificent chariot drawn by two noble brown steeds,[202] and was begged to take back with him to Persia a curiously-wrought set of draughts,* as a remembrance of Sais. The separate pieces were made of ebony and ivory, some being curiously inlaid with sentences, in hieroglyphics of gold and silver.

Amasis laughed heartily with his friends at Gyges' artifice, allowed the young heroes to mix freely with his family, and behaved towards them himself as a jovial father towards his merry sons. That the ancient Egyptian was not quite extinguished in him could only be discerned at meal-times, when a separate table was allotted to the Persians. The religion of his ancestors would have pronounced him defiled, had he eaten at the same table with men of another nation.[203]

When Amasis, at last, three days after the release of Gyges, declared that his daughter Nitetis would be prepared to depart for Asia in the course of two more weeks, all the Persians regretted that their stay in Egypt was so near its close.

Crœsus had enjoyed the society of the Samian

202. Some especially fine paintings of horses in rich trappings, evidently by an artist's hand, are to be found on the monuments at Thebes. See Rosellini, *Mon. stor.* I. *Plate* 78. Lepsius, *Denkmäler* III. 126 *and following*, and the *Description de l'Egypte ant.* II. *and* III. (Thebes). Magnificent modern Egyptian horses are represented in Ebers, *Aegypten in Bild und Wort.* p. 241.

203. Herodotus II. 41. says that the Egyptians neither kissed, nor ate out of the same dish with foreigners, nay, indeed, that they refused to touch meat, in the cutting up of which the knife of a Greek had been used. Nor were the lesser dynasties of the Delta allowed, according to the Stela of Pianchi, to cross the threshold of the Pharaohs because they were unclean and ate fish. In the book of Genesis, the brethren of Joseph were not allowed to eat bread with the Egyptians.

* See note 152.

poets and sculptors. Gyges had shared his father's preference for Greek art and artists. Darius, who had formerly studied astronomy in Babylon,[204] was one evening observing the heavens, when, to his surprise, he was addressed by the aged Neithotep and invited to follow him on to the temple-roof. Darius, ever eager to acquire knowlege, did not wait to be asked twice, and was to be found there every night in earnest attention to the old priest's lessons.

On one occasion Psamtik met him thus with his master, and asked the latter what could have induced him to initiate a Persian in the Egyptian mysteries.

"I am only teaching him," answered the high-priest, "what is as well known to every learned Chaldee in Babylon as to ourselves, and am thereby gaining the friendship of a man, whose stars as far outshine those of Cambyses as the sun outshines the moon. This Darius, I tell thee, will be a mighty ruler. I have even seen the beams of his planet shining over Egypt. The truly wise man extends his gaze into the future, regards the objects lying on either side of his road, as well as the road itself. Thou canst not know in which of the many houses by which thou passest daily, a future benefactor may not have been reared for thee. Leave nought unnoticed that lies in thy path, but above all direct thy gaze upward to the stars. As the faithful dog lies in wait night after night for thieves, so have I watched these pilgrims of the heavens fifty years long—these foretellers of the fates of men, burning in ethereal space,

204. The Chaldæans of Babylon were the next best astronomers to the Egyptians. Aristoteles *de cœlo* II. 12. Chasles maintains that they made use of astronomical tables. *Comptes rendus de l'académie des sciences*. T. XXIII. 1846. *p.* 852-854. According to Herodotus, Darius was well-affected to the Egyptians and held their wisdom in high estimation.

and announcing, not only the return of summer and winter, but the arrival of good and bad fortune, honor and disgrace. These are the unerring guides, who have pointed out to me in Darius a plant, that will one day wax into a mighty tree."

To Bartja, Darius' nightly studies were especially welcome; they necessitated more sleep in the morning, and so rendered Bartja's stolen early rides to Naukratis, (on which Zopyrus, to whom he had confided his secret, accompanied him), easier of accomplishment. During the interviews with Sappho, Zopyrus and the attendants used all their endeavors to kill a few snipes, jackals or jerboas. They could then, on their return, maintain to their Mentor Crœsus, that they had been pursuing field-sports, the favorite occupation of the Persian nobility.

The change which the power of a first love had wrought in the innermost character of Bartja, passed unnoticed by all but Tachot, the daughter of Amasis. From the first day on which they had spoken together she had loved him, and her quick feelings told her at once that something had happened to estrange him from herself. Formerly his behavior had been that of a brother, and he had sought her companionship; but now he carefully avoided every approach to intimacy, for he had guessed her secret and felt as if even a kind look would have been an offence against his loyalty to Sappho.

In her distress at this change Tachot confided her sorrows to Nitetis. The latter bade her take courage, and the two girls built many a castle in the air, picturing to themselves the happiness of being always together at one court, and married to two royal brothers. But as the days went by, the visits of the handsome

prince became more and more rare, and when he did come, his behavior to Tachot was cold and distant.

Yet the poor girl could not but confess that Bartja had grown handsomer and more manly during his stay in Egypt. An expression of proud and yet gentle consciousness lay beaming in his large eyes, and a strange dreamy air of rest often took the place of his former gay spirits. His cheeks had lost their brilliant color, but that added to his beauty, while it lessened hers, who, like him, became paler from day to day.

Melitta, the old slave, had taken the lovers under her protection. She had surprised them one morning, but the prince had given her such rich presents, and her darling had begged, flattered and coaxed so sweetly, that at last Melitta promised to keep their secret, and later, yielding to that natural impulse which moves all old women to favor lovers, had even given them every assistance in her power. She already saw her "sweet child" mistress of a hemisphere, often addressed her as "my Princess" and "my Queen" when none were by to hear, and in many a weak moment imagined a brilliant future for herself in some high office at the Persian court.

CHAPTER XI.

THREE days before the time fixed for the departure of Nitetis, Rhodopis had invited a large number of guests to her house at Naukratis, amongst whom Crœsus and Gyges were included.

The two lovers had agreed to meet in the garden,

protected by the darkness and the old slave, while the guests were occupied at the banquet. Melitta, therefore, having convinced herself that the guests were thoroughly absorbed in conversation, opened the garden-gate, admitted the prince, brought Sappho to him, and then retired, promising to warn them of any intruder by clapping her hands.

"I shall only have you near me three days longer," whispered Sappho. "Do you know, sometimes it seems to me as if I had only seen you yesterday for the first time; but generally I feel as if you had belonged to me for a whole eternity, and I had loved you all my life."

"To me too it seems as if you had always been mine, for I cannot imagine how I could ever have existed without you. If only the parting were over and we were together again!"

"Oh, believe me, that will pass more quickly than you fancy. Of course it will seem long to wait—very long; but when it is over, and we are together again, I think it will seem as if we had never been parted. So it has been with me every day. How I have longed for the morning to come and bring you with it! but when it came and you were sitting by my side, I felt as if I had had you all the time and your hand had never left my head."

"And yet a strange feeling of fear comes over me, when I think of our parting hour."

"I do not fear it so very much. I know my heart will bleed when you say farewell, but I am sure you will come back and will not have forgotten me. Melitta wanted to enquire of the Oracle whether you would remain faithful; and to question an old woman who

has just come from Phrygia and can conjure by night from drawn cords, with incense, styrax, moon-shaped cakes, and wild-briar leaves;[205] but I would have none of this, for my heart knows better than the Pythia, the cords, or the smoke of sacrifice, that you will be true to me, and love me always."

"And your heart speaks the truth."

"But I have sometimes been afraid; and have blown into a poppy-leaf, and struck it, as the young girls here do. If it broke with a loud crack I was very happy, and cried, 'Ah! he will not forget!' but if the leaf tore without a sound I felt sad. I dare say I did this a hundred times, but generally the leaf gave the wished-for sound, and I had much oftener reason to be joyful than sad."[206]

"May it be ever thus!"

"It must be! but dearest, do not speak so loudly; I see Knakias going down to the Nile for water and he will hear us."

"Well, I will speak low. There, I will stroke back your silky hair and whisper in your ear 'I love you.' Could you understand?"

"My grandmother says that it is easy to understand what we like to hear; but if you had just whispered, 'I hate you,' your eyes would have told me with a

205. These are the spells which Glycera desired to consult, when her lover, the tragic poet Menander, was called to Egypt by king Ptolemy. Her letter is as clever as it is charming. Alciphr. II. *Ep.* 4. I would mention also the beautiful poem by Theokritus on the love-sick girl and her spells.

206. This questioning of flowers reminds us of the way in which children and girls now-a-days pull the leaves of the acacia and the petals of the daisy, and was not unusual among the ancients. Pollux IX. 27. Becker, *Charikles* I. 327. In modern Greece the young girls are said still to consult the same oracles. Bybilakis, Neugriechisches Leben, p. 20.

thousand glad voices that you loved me. Silent eyes are much more eloquent than all the tongues in the world."

"If I could only speak the beautiful Greek language as you do, I would . . ."

"Oh, I am so glad you cannot, for if you could tell me all you feel, I think you would not look into my eyes so lovingly. Words are nothing. Listen to the nightingale yonder! She never had the gift of speech and yet I think I can understand her."

"Will you confide her secret to me? I should like to know what Gulgul, as we Persians call the nightingale, has to talk about to her mate in the rose-bush. May you betray her secret?"

"I will whisper it softly. Philomel sings to her mate 'I love thee,' and he answers, (don't you hear him?), 'Itys, ito, itys.'"[207]

207. Thus Aeschylus renders the sweet song of the nightingale. The ingenious interpretation of the words ἴτυς, ἴτω, is a playful idea, which we can venture to put into the mouth of our childlike Sappho. The Itys-call of the nightingale had, however, originally a very different signification. Philomela is bemoaning the boy Itys, who has been slain to revenge her wrongs on his father. Prokne, the sister of Philomela and daughter of the Athenian, Pandion, was the wife of Tereus of Daulis in Thrace. Itys was their son. Tereus, having to conduct Philomela to her sister, used violence towards the maiden on the way thither, cut out her tongue to prevent her from revealing his conduct, and left her in the wood,. Philomela, however, wove the story of her wrongs into a garment, by means of which she informed her sister Prokne of Tereus' baseness. On discovering this, Prokne killed her own child Itys and caused his flesh to be served up as a dish for her husband. The sisters then fled, and were pursued by Tereus on his discovering that he had eaten his own son. They prayed to the gods, who granted their petition, and transformed them, together with Tereus, into birds. According to the original myth, Prokne fled into the forest in the form of a nightingale and bewailed her sacrificed Itys. Philomela was turned into a swallow, who, from the loss of her tongue, could only twitter and cry "Tereu." Tereus became a hoopoe, whose perpetual call (referring to his lost son) was "pou?" "where"? The punishments of entire and of semi-sleeplessness were imposed on the nightingale and the swallow. The accounts differ as to which sister

"And what does that mean, 'Ito, ito?'"

"I accept it."

"And Itys?"

"Oh, that must be explained, to be rightly understood. Itys is a circle; and a circle, I was always taught, is the symbol of eternity, having neither beginning nor end; so the nightingale sings, 'I accept it for eternity.'"

"And if I say to you, 'I love thee?'"

"Then I shall answer gladly, like the sweet nightingale, 'I accept it for to-day, to-morrow, for all eternity!'"

"What a wonderful night it is! everything so still and silent; I do not even hear the nightingale now; she is sitting in the acacia-tree among the bunches of sweet blossoms. I can see the tops of the palm-trees in the Nile, and the moon's reflection between them, glistening like a white swan."

"Yes, her rays are over every living thing like silver fetters, and the whole world lies motionless beneath them like a captive woman. Happy as I feel now, yet I could not even laugh, and still less speak in a loud voice."

"Then whisper, or sing!"

"Yes, that is the best. Give me a lyre. Thank you. Now I will lean my head on your breast, and sing you a little, quiet, peaceful song. It was written by Alkman,* the Lydian, who lived in Sparta, in praise of night and her stillness. You must listen though,

became the nightingale. Ovid, who gives the whole story in a most charming form (*Metamorphoses* VI. 425. *seq.*) leaves the question undecided. But he too, (*Amores* II. 6. 7-10.) assumes that Philomela became a nightingale, and this has since become the universal belief.

* See note 6.

for this low, sweet slumber-song must only leave the lips like a gentle wind. Do not kiss me any more, please, till I have finished; then I will ask you to thank me with a kiss:

"Now o'er the drowsy earth still night prevails,
Calm sleep the mountain tops and shady vales,
The rugged cliffs and hollow glens;
The wild beasts slumber in their dens;
The cattle on the hill. Deep in the sea
The countless finny race and monster brood
Tranquil repose. Even the busy bee
Forgets her daily toil. The silent wood
No more with noisy hum of insect rings;
And all the feathered tribe, by gentle sleep subdued,
Roost in the glade and hang their drooping wings." *

"Now, dearest, where is my kiss?"

"I had forgotten it in listening, just as before I forgot to listen in kissing."

"You are too bad. But tell me, is not my song lovely?"

"Yes, beautiful, like everything else you sing."

"And the Greek poets write?"

"Yes, there you are right too, I admit."

"Are there no poets in Persia?"

"How can you ask such a question? How could a nation, who despised song, pretend to any nobility of feeling?"

"But you have some very bad customs."

"Well?"

"You take so many wives."

"My Sappho . . ."

"Do not misunderstand me. I love you so much, that I have no other wish than to see you happy and

* Translation by Colonel Mure.

be allowed to be always with you. If, by taking me for your only wife, you would outrage the laws of your country, if you would thereby expose yourself to contempt, or even blame, (for who could dare to despise my Bartja!) then take other wives; but let me have you, for myself alone, at least two, or perhaps even three years. Will you promise this, Bartja?"

"I will."

"And then, when my time has passed, and you must yield to the customs of your country (for it will not be love that leads you to bring home a second wife), then let me be the first among your slaves. Oh! I have pictured that so delightfully to myself. When you go to war I shall set the tiara on your head, gird on the sword, and place the lance in your hand; and when you return a conqueror, I shall be the first to crown you with the wreath of victory. When you ride out to the chase, mine will be the duty of buckling on your spurs, and when you go to the banquet, of adorning and anointing you, winding the garlands of poplar and roses and twining them around your forehead and shoulders. If wounded, I will be your nurse; will never stir from your side if you are ill, and when I see you happy will retire, and feast my eyes from afar on your glory and happiness. Then perchance you will call me to your side, and your kiss will say, 'I am content with my Sappho, I love her still.'"

"O Sappho, wert thou only my wife now!—to-day! The man who possesses such a treasure as I have in thee, will guard it carefully, but never care to seek for others which, by its side, can only show their miserable poverty. He who has once loved thee, can never love another: I know it is the custom in my country to have

many wives, but this is only allowed; there is no law to enjoin it. My father had, it is true, a hundred female slaves, but only one real, true wife, our mother Kassandane."

"And I will be your Kassandane."

"No, my Sappho, for what you will be to me, no woman ever yet was to her husband."

"When shall you come to fetch me?"

"As soon as I can, and am permitted to do so."

"Then I ought to be able to wait patiently."

"And shall I ever hear from you?"

"Oh, I shall write long, long letters, and charge every wind with loving messages for you."

"Yes, do so, my darling; and as to the letters, give them to the messenger who will bring Nitetis tidings from Egypt from time to time."

"Where shall I find him?"

"I will see that a man is stationed at Naukratis, to take charge of everything you send to him. All this I will settle with Melitta."

"Yes, we can trust her, she is prudent and faithful; but I have another friend, who is dearer to me than any one else excepting you, and who loves me too better than any one else does, but you—"

"You mean your grandmother Rhodopis."

"Yes, my faithful guardian and teacher."

"Ah, she is a noble woman. Crœsus considers her the most excellent among women, and he has studied mankind as the physicians do plants and herbs. He knows that rank poison lies hidden in some, in others healing cordials, and often says that Rhodopis is like a rose which, while fading away herself, and dropping leaf after leaf, continues to shed perfume and quickening

balsam for the sick and weak, and awaits in patience the wind which at last shall waft her from us."

"The gods grant that she may be with us for a long time yet! Dearest, will you grant me one great favor?"

"It is granted before I hear it."

"When you take me home, do not leave Rhodopis here. She must come with us. She is so kind and loves me so fervently, that what makes me happy will make her so too, and whatever is dear to me, will seem to her worthy of being loved."

"She shall be the first among our guests."

"Now I am quite happy and satisfied, for I am necessary to my grandmother; she could not live without her child. I laugh her cares and sorrows away, and when she is singing to me, or teaching me how to guide the style, or strike the lute, a clearer light beams from her brow, the furrows ploughed by grief disappear, her gentle eyes laugh, and she seems to forget the evil past in the happy present."

"Before we part, I will ask her whether she will follow us home."

"Oh, how glad that makes me! and do you know, the first days of our absence from each other do not seem so very dreadful to me. Now you are to be my husband, I may surely tell you everything that pains or pleases me, even when I dare not tell any one else, and so you must know, that, when you leave, we expect two little visitors; they are the children of the kind Phanes, whom your friend Gyges saved so nobly. I mean to be like a mother to the little creatures, and when they have been good I shall sing them a story of a prince, a brave hero, who took a simple maiden to be his wife; and when I describe the prince I shall have you in my

mind, and though my little listeners will not guess it, I shall be describing you from head to foot. My prince shall be tall like you, shall have your golden curls and blue eyes, and your rich, royal dress shall adorn his noble figure. Your generous heart, your love of truth, and your beautiful reverence for the gods, your courage and heroism, in short, every thing that I love and honor in you, I shall give to the hero of my tale. How the children will listen! and when they cry, 'Oh, how we love the prince, how good and beautiful he must be! if we could only see him!' then I shall press them close to my heart and kiss them as I kiss you now, and so they will have gained their wish, for as you are enthroned in my heart, you must be living within me and therefore near to them, and when they embrace me they will embrace you too."

"And I shall go to my little sister Atossa and tell her all I have seen on my journey, and when I speak of the Greeks, their grace, their glorious works of art, and their beautiful women, I shall describe the golden Aphrodite in your lovely likeness. I shall tell her of your virtue, your beauty and modesty, of your singing, which is so sweet that even the nightingale is silent in order to listen to it, of your love and tenderness. But all this I shall tell her belongs to the divine Cypris, and when she cries, 'O Aphrodite, could I but see thee!' I too shall kiss my sister."

"Hark, what was that? Melitta surely clapped her hands. Farewell, we must not stay! but we shall soon see each other again."

"One more kiss!"

"Farewell!"

Melitta had fallen asleep at her post, overcome by

age and weariness. Her dreams were suddenly disturbed by a loud noise, and she clapped her hands directly to warn the lovers and call Sappho, as she perceived by the stars that the dawn was not far off.

As the two approached the house, they discovered that the noise which had awakened the old slave, proceeded from the guests, who were preparing for departure.

Urging her to make the greatest haste, Melitta pushed the frightened girl into the house, took her at once to her sleeping-room, and was beginning to undress her when Rhodopis entered.

"You are still up, Sappho?" she asked. "What is this, my child?"

Melitta trembled and had a falsehood ready on her lips, but Sappho, throwing herself into her grandmother's arms, embraced her tenderly and told the whole story of her love.

Rhodopis turned pale, ordered Melitta to leave the chamber, and, placing herself in front of her grandchild, laid both hands on her shoulders and said earnestly, "Look into my eyes, Sappho. Canst thou look at me as happily and as innocently, as thou couldst before this Persian came to us?"

The girl raised her eyes at once with a joyful smile; then Rhodopis clasped her to her bosom, kissed her and continued: "Since thou wert a little child my constant effort has been to train thee to a noble maidenhood and guard thee from the approach of love. I had intended, in accordance with the customs of our country,[208] to choose a fitting husband for thee

208. The Spartans married for love, but the Athenians were accustomed to negotiate their marriages with the parents of the bride alone.

shortly myself, to whose care I should have committed thee; but the gods willed differently. Eros mocks all human efforts to resist or confine him; warm Æolian[209] blood runs in thy veins and demands love; the passionate heart of thy Lesbian forefathers beats in thy breast. What has happened cannot now be undone. Treasure these happy hours of a first, pure love; hold them fast in the chambers of memory, for to every human being there must come, sooner or later, a present so sad and desolate, that the beautiful past is all he has to live upon. Remember this handsome prince in silence, bid him farewell when he departs to his native country, but beware of hoping to see him again. The Persians are fickle and inconstant, lovers of everything new and foreign.[210] The prince has been fascinated by thy sweetness and grace. He loves thee ardently now, but remember, he is young and handsome, courted by every one, and a Persian. Give him up that he may not abandon thee!"

"But how can I, grandmother? I have sworn to be faithful to him for ever."

"Oh, children! Ye play with eternity as if it were but a passing moment! I could blame thee for thus plighting thy troth, but I rejoice that thou regardest the oath as binding. I detest the blasphemous proverb: 'Zeus pays no heed to lovers' oaths.' Why should an oath touching the best and holiest feelings of humanity

This custom was either the cause or the result of the very secluded life led by the Athenian girls. More on this subject will be found in the text of Vol. II. and its notes 97. 98.

209. Charaxus, the grandfather of our heroine, and brother of the poetess Sappho, was, as a Lesbian, an Æolian Greek.

210. In this, as in other points, the Persians prove themselves of the Germanic race. They have the same admiration for everything new and strange now, as in the days of Herodotus. Herod. I. 135.

be regarded by the Deity, as inferior in importance to asseverations respecting the trifling questions of mine and thine? Keep thy promise then,—hold fast thy love, but prepare to renounce thy lover."

"Never, grandmother! could I ever have loved Bartja, if I had not trusted him? Just because he is a Persian and holds truth to be the highest virtue, I may venture to hope that he will remember his oath, and, notwithstanding those evil customs of the Asiatics, will take and keep me as his only wife."

"But if he should forget, thy youth will be passed in mourning, and with an embittered heart . . ."

"O, dear kind grandmother, pray do not speak of such dreadful things. If you knew him as well as I do, you would rejoice with me, and would tell me I was right to believe that the Nile may dry up and the Pyramids crumble into ruins, before my Bartja can ever deceive me!"

The girl spoke these words with such a joyful, perfect confidence, and her eyes, though filled with tears, were so brilliant with happiness and warmth of feeling, that Rhodopis' face grew cheerful too.

Sappho threw her arms again round her grandmother, told her every word that Bartja had said to her, and ended the long account by exclaiming: Oh, grandmother, I am so happy, so very happy, and if you will come with us to Persia, I shall have nothing more to wish from the Immortals."

"That will not last long," said Rhodopis. "The gods cast envious glances at the happiness of mortals; they measure our portion of evil with lavish hands, and give us but a scanty allowance of good. But now go to bed, my child, and let us pray together that all

may end happily. I met thee this morning as a child, I part from thee to-night a woman; and, when thou art a wife, may thy kiss be as joyful as the one thou givest me now. To-morrow I will talk the matter over with Crœsus. He must decide whether I dare allow thee to await the return of the Persian prince, or whether I must entreat thee to forget him and become the domestic wife of a Greek husband. Sleep well, my darling, thy grandmother will wake and watch for thee."

Sappho's happy fancies soon cradled her to sleep; but Rhodopis remained awake watching the day dawn, and the sun rise, her mind occupied with thoughts which brought smiles and frowns across her countenance in rapid succession.

The next morning she sent to Crœsus, begging him to grant her an hour's interview, acquainted him with every particular she had heard from Sappho, and concluded her tale with these words: "I know not what demands may be made on the consort of a Persian king, but I can truly say that I believe Sappho to be worthy of the first monarch of the world. Her father was free and of noble birth, and I have heard that, by Persian law, the descent of a child is determined by the rank of the father only. In Egypt, too, the descendants of a female slave enjoy the same rights as those of a princess, if they owe their existence to the same father."[211]

"I have listened to you in silence," answered Crœsus, "and must confess, that, like yourself, I do not know in this moment whether to be glad or sorry for this attachment. Cambyses and Kassandane (the

211. Diod. I. 81.

king's and Bartja's mother) wished to see the prince married before we left Persia, for the king has no children, and should he remain childless, the only hope for the family of Cyrus rests on Bartja, as the great founder of the Persian empire left but two sons,—Cambyses, and him who is now the suitor of your granddaughter. The latter is the hope and pride of the entire Persian nation, high and low; the darling of the people; generous, and noble, handsome, virtuous, and worthy of their love. It is indeed expected that the princes shall marry in their own family, the Achæmenidæ; but the Persians have an unbounded predilection for everything foreign. Enchanted with the beauty of your granddaughter, and rendered indulgent by their partiality for Bartja, they would easily forgive this breach of an ancient custom. Indeed, if the king gives his approval, no objection on the part of his subjects can be entertained. The history of Iran too offers a sufficient number of examples, in which even slaves became the mothers of kings.[212] The queen mother, whose position, in the eyes of the people, is nearly as high as that of the monarch himself, will do nothing to thwart the happiness of her youngest and favorite son. When she sees that he will not give up Sappho,—that his smiling face, in which she adores the image of her great husband Cyrus, becomes clouded, I verily believe she would be ready to sanction his taking even a Scythian woman to wife, if it could restore him to cheerfulness. Neither will Cambyses himself refuse his consent if his mother press the point at a right moment."

"In that case every difficulty is set aside," cried Rhodopis joyfully.

212. Firdusi, *Book of the kings. Sons of Feridun.*

"It is not the marriage itself, but the time that must follow, which causes me uneasiness," answered Crœsus.

"Do you think then that Bartja . . .?"

"From him I fear nothing. He has a pure heart, and has been so long proof against love, that now he has once yielded, he will love long and ardently."

"What then do you fear?"

"You must remember that, though the charming wife of their favorite will be warmly received by all his friends of his own sex, there are thousands of idle women in the harems of the Persian nobles, who will endeavor, by every artifice and intrigue in their power, to injure the newly-risen star; and whose greatest joy it will be to ruin such an inexperienced child and make her unhappy."

"You have a very bad opinion of the Persian women."

"They are but women, and will naturally envy her, who has gained the husband they all desired either for themselves or for their daughters. In their monotonous life, devoid of occupation, envy easily becomes hatred, and the gratification of these evil passions is the only compensation which the poor creatures can obtain for the total absence of love and loss of freedom. I repeat, the more beautiful Sappho is, the more malicious they will feel towards her, and, even if Bartja should love her so fervently as not to take a second wife for two or three years, she will still have such heavy hours to encounter, that I really do not know whether I dare congratulate you on her apparently brilliant future."

"That is quite my own feeling. A simple Greek would be more welcome to me than this son of a mighty monarch."

In this moment Knakias brought Bartja into the room. He went to Rhodopis at once, besought her not to refuse him the hand of her granddaughter, spoke of his ardent love, and assured her that his happiness would be doubled, if she would consent to accompany them to Persia. Then turning to Crœsus, he seized his hand and entreated forgiveness for having so long concealed his great happiness from one who had been like a father to him, at the same time begging him to second his suit with Rhodopis.

The old man listened to the youth's passionate language with a smile, and said: "Ah, Bartja, how often have I warned thee against love! It is a scorching fire."

"But its flame is bright and beautiful."

"It causes pain."

"But such pain is sweet."

"It leads the mind astray."

"But it strengthens the heart."

"Oh, this love!" cried Rhodopis. "Inspired by Eros, the boy speaks as if he had been all his life studying under an Attic orator!"

"And yet," answered Crœsus, "these lovers are the most unteachable of pupils. Convince them as clearly as you will, that their passion is only another word for poison, fire, folly, death, they still cry, 'Tis sweet,' and will not be hindered in their course."

As he was speaking Sappho came in. A white festal robe, with wide sleeves, and borders of purple embroidery, fell in graceful folds round her delicate figure, and was confined at the waist by a golden girdle. Her hair was adorned with fresh roses, and on her bosom lay her lover's first gift, the flashing diamond star.

She came up modestly and gracefully, and made a low obeisance to the aged Crœsus. His eyes rested long on the maidenly and lovely countenance, and the longer he gazed the kindlier became his gaze. For a moment he seemed to grow young again in the visions conjured up by memory, and involuntarily he went up to the young girl, kissed her affectionately on the forehead, and, taking her by the hand, led her to Bartja with the words: "Take her, thy wife she must be, if the entire race of the Achæmenidæ were to conspire against us!"

"Have I no voice in the matter?" said Rhodopis, smiling through her tears.

On hearing these words, Bartja and Sappho each took one of her hands, and gazed entreatingly into her face. She rose to her full stature, and like a prophetess exclaimed: "Eros, who brought you to each other, Zeus and Apollo defend and protect you. I see you now like two fair roses on one stem, loving and happy in the spring of life. What summer, autumn and winter may have in store for you, lies hidden with the gods. May the shades of thy departed parents, Sappho, smile approvingly when these tidings of their child shall reach them in the nether world."

Three days later a densely packed crowd was once more surging round the Sais landing-place. This time they had assembled to bid a last farewell to their king's daughter, and in this hour the people gave clear tokens that, in spite of all the efforts of the priestly caste, their hearts remained loyal to their monarch and his house.

For when Amasis and Ladice embraced Nitetis for

the last time with tears—when Tachot, in presence of all the inhabitants of Sais, following her sister down the broad flight of steps that led to the river, threw her arms round her neck once more and burst into sobs—when at last the wind filled the sails of the royal boat and bore the princess, destined to be the great king's bride, from their sight, few eyes among that vast crowd remained dry.

The priests alone looked on at this sad scene with unmoved gravity and coldness; but when the south wind at last bore away the strangers who had robbed them of their princess, many a curse and execration followed from the Egyptians on the shore; Tachot alone stood weeping there and waving her veil to them. For whom were these tears? for the play-fellow of her youth, or for the handsome, beloved prince?

Amasis embraced his wife and daughter in the eyes of all his people; and held up his little grandson, Prince Necho, to their gaze, the sight eliciting cries of joy on all sides. But Psamtik, the child's own father, stood by the while, tearless and motionless. The king appeared not to observe him, until Neithotep approached, and leading him to his father, joined their hands and called down the blessing of the gods upon the royal house.

At this the Egyptians fell on their knees with uplifted hands. Amasis clasped his son to his heart, and when the high-priest had concluded his prayer, the following colloquy between the latter and Amasis took place in low tones:

"Let peace be between us for our own and Egypt's sake!"

"Hast thou received Nebenchari's letter?"

"A Samian pirate-vessel is in pursuit of Phanes' trireme."

"Behold the child of thy predecessor Hophra, the rightful heiress of the Egyptian throne, departing unhindered to a distant land!"

"The works of the Greek temple now building in Memphis shall be discontinued."

"May Isis grant us peace, and may prosperity and happiness increase in our land!"

The Greek colonists in Naukratis had prepared a feast to celebrate the departure of their protector's daughter.

Numerous animals had been slaughtered in sacrifice on the altars of the Greek divinities, and the Nile-boats were greeted with a loud cry of "Ailinos" on their arrival in the harbor.

A bridal wreath, composed of a hoop of gold wound round with scented[213] violets, was presented to Nitetis by a troop of young girls in holiday dresses, the act of presentation being performed by Sappho, as the most beautiful among the maidens of Naukratis.

On accepting the gift Nitetis kissed her forehead in token of gratitude. The triremes were already waiting; she went on board, the rowers took their oars and began the Keleusma.*[214] The south wind filled the sails, and

213. The Greek bridal wreath usually consisted of violets and myrtle. On the customs observed at marriages see Vol. II. notes 97. 98.

214. The measure of the Keleusma was generally given by a flute-player, the Trieraules. Æschylus, *Persians* 403. Laërt. Diog. IV. 22. Becker, *Charikles* I. p. 213. In the Frogs of Aristophanes the inhabitants of the marshes are made to sing the Keleusma, *v.* 205.

* The melody, to the measure of which the Greek boatmen usually timed their strokes.

again the Ailinos rang across the water from a thousand voices. Bartja stood on the deck, and waved a last loving farewell to his betrothed; while Sappho prayed in silence to Aphrodite Euploia, the protectress of those who go down to the sea in ships. A tear rolled down her cheek, but around her lips played a smile of love and hope, though her old slave Melitta, who accompanied her to carry her parasol, was weeping as if her heart would break. On seeing, however, a few leaves fall from her darling's wreath, she forgot her tears for a moment and whispered softly: "Yes, dear heart, it is easy to see that you are in love; when the leaves fall from a maiden's wreath, 'tis a sure sign that her heart has been touched by Eros.[215]

CHAPTER XII.

SEVEN weeks after Nitetis had quitted her native country, a long train of equipages and horsemen was to be seen on the king's highway[216] from the west to Babylon, moving steadily towards that gigantic city, whose towers might already be descried in the far distance.

The principal object in this caravan was a richly-gilded, four-wheeled carriage, closed in at the sides by curtains, and above by a roof supported on wooden pillars. In this vehicle, called the Harmamaxa,* rest-

215. See Kallimachus' epigram 45, Athenæus XV. p. 669.

216. The great road called the "king's road," of which we shall have more to say, was made by Cyrus and carefully kept up by Darius.

* An Asiatic travelling carriage. The first mention of these is in Xenophon's Anabasis, where we find a queen travelling in such a vehicle. They were later adopted by the Romans and used for the same object.

ing on rich cushions of gold brocade, sat our Egyptian Princess.

On either side rode her escort, viz.: the Persian princes and nobles whom we have already learnt to know during their visit to Egypt, Crœsus and his son.

Behind these, a long train, consisting of fifty vehicles of different kinds and six hundred beasts of burden, stretched away into the distance, and the royal carriage was preceded by a troop of splendidly-mounted Persian cavalry.

The high-road followed the course of the Euphrates, passing through luxuriant fields of wheat, barley and sesame* yielding fruit two, and sometimes even three, hundred-fold. Slender date-palms covered with golden fruit were scattered in every direction over the fields, which were thoroughly irrigated by means of canals and ditches.[217]

It was winter, but the sun shone warm and bright from a cloudless sky. The mighty river swarmed with craft of all sizes, either transporting the products of Upper Armenia to the plains of Mesopotamia, or the wares of Greece and Asia Minor from Thapsakus** to Babylon. Pumps and water-wheels poured refreshing streams over the thirsty land, and pretty villages ornamented the shores of the river. Indeed every object gave evidence that our caravan was approaching the metropolis of a carefully governed and civilized state.

217. Herodotus I. 193. The ancient aqueduct discovered by Layard. *Nineveh and Babylon* p. 215. Bass-reliefs representing this well-watered and cultivated region I. l. p. 233.

* A species of grain which grows luxuriantly in the neighborhood of Babylon, and from which oil is extracted.

** An important commercial town on the Euphrates, and the point of observation from which Eratosthenes took his measurements of the earth.

Nitetis and her retinue now halted at a long brick house, roofed with asphalte,[218] and surrounded by a grove of plane-trees. Here Crœsus was lifted from his horse, and approaching the carriage, exclaimed: "Here we are at length at the last station! That high tower which you see on the horizon is the celebrated temple of Bel, next to the Pyramids, one of the most gigantic works ever constructed by human hands. Before sunset we shall have reached the brazen gates of Babylon. And now I would ask you to alight, and let me send your maidens into the house; for here you must put on Persian apparel, to appear well-pleasing in the eyes of Cambyses. In a few hours you will stand before your future husband. But you are pale! Permit your maidens to adorn your cheeks with a color that shall look like the excitement of joy. A first impression is often a final one, and this is especially true with regard to Cambyses. If, which I doubt not, you are pleasing in his eyes at first, then you have won his love for ever; but if you should displease him to-day he will never look kindly on you again, for he is rough and harsh. But take courage, my daughter, and above all, do not forget the advice I have given you." Nitetis dried her tears as she answered: "How can I ever thank you, O Crœsus, my second father, my protector and adviser, for all your goodness? Oh, forsake me not in the days to come! and if the path of my life should lead through grief and care, be near to help and

218. Nearly all authorities, ancient as well as modern, report that bitumen, which is still plentifully found in the neighborhood of Babylon, was used by the Babylonians as mortar. See, besides the accounts of ancient writers, W. Vaux, *Nineveh and Persepolis. An historical sketch of Assyria and Persia.* p. 136. Layard l. l. p. 262. and pp. 529. 530. Burnt bitumen as used by Assyrians for cement in building.

guide me as you did on the mountain-passes of this long and dangerous journey. A thousand times I thank thee, O my father!"

And, as she said these words, the young girl threw her arms around the old man's neck and kissed him tenderly.

On entering the court-yard, a tall stout man, followed by a train of Asiatic serving-maidens, came forward to meet them. This was Boges, the chief of the eunuchs,[219] an important official at the Persian court. His beardless face wore a smile of fulsome sweetness; in his ears hung costly jewelled pendents; his neck, arms, legs and his effeminately long garments glittered all over with gold chains and rings, and his crisp, stiff curls, bound round by a purple fillet, streamed with powerful and penetrating perfumes.

Making a low and reverential obeisance before Nitetis, and holding, the while, his fat hands overloaded with rings before his mouth, he thus addressed her: "Cambyses, lord of the world, hath sent me to thee, O Queen, that I may refresh thy heart with the dew of his salutations. He sendeth thee likewise by me, even by me the lowest of his servants, Persian raiment, that thou, as befitteth the consort of the mightiest of all rulers, mayest approach the gates of the Achæmenidæ in Median garments. These women whom thou seest are thy handmaidens, and only await thy bidding to transform thee from an Egyptian jewel into a Persian pearl."

219. See Ebers, *Aegypten und die Bücher Moses*. p. 296 and following, on this unfortunate class of human beings, who far more probably owed their origin to the jealousy of the Easterns and their desire to perpetuate their race or family in its original purity, than to Semiramis' wish to be surrounded only by men who, like herself, were beardless and had high-toned voices. See portrait of a eunuch by Gentz in Ebers *Aegypten in Bild und Wort*.

The master of the caravansary then appeared, bearing, in token of welcome, a basket of fruits arranged with great taste.*

Nitetis returned her thanks to both these men in kind and friendly words; then entering the house laid aside the dress and ornaments of her native land, weeping as she did so, allowed the strangers to unloose the plait of hair which hung down at the left side of her head, and was the distinctive mark of an Egyptian princess,[220] and to array her in Median garments.

In the meantime, a repast had been commanded by the princes who accompanied her. Eager and agile attendants rushed to the baggage-waggons, fetching thence, in a few moments, seats, tables, and golden utensils of all kinds. The cooks vied with them and with each other, and as if by magic, in a short space of time a richly-adorned banquet for the hungry guests appeared, at which even the flowers were not wanting.

During the entire journey our travellers had lived in a similar luxury, as their beasts of burden carried every imaginable convenience, from tents of water-proof materials inwrought with gold, down to silver foot-stools; and in the vehicles which composed their train were not only bakers, cooks, cup-bearers and carvers, but perfumers, hair-dressers and weavers of garlands. Beside these conveniences, a well-fitted up caravansary, or inn, was to be found about every eighteen miles along the whole route, where disabled horses could be replaced, the plantations around which afforded a re-

220. In almost all the Egyptian pictures, the daughters and sons of the Pharaohs are represented with these locks of hair, plaited and reaching from the forehead to the neck. Rosellini, *Mon. stor.* II. 123. Lepsius, *Denkmäler.* The daughter of Rameses II. is drawn thus, and we have examples of the same in many other pictures.

* See vol. 2, note 3.

freshing shelter from the noonday heat, or their hearths a refuge from the snow and cold on the mountain-passes.

The kingdom of Persia was indebted for these inns (similar to the post-stations of modern days) to Cyrus, who had endeavored to connect the widely-distant provinces of his immense dominions by a system of well-kept roads, and a regular postal service. At each of these stations the horseman carrying the letter-bag was relieved by a fresh man on a fresh steed, to whom the letters were transferred, and who, in his turn, darted off like the wind, to be again replaced at a similar distance by another rider. These couriers, called Angari, were considered the swiftest horsemen in the world.[221]

Just as the banqueters, amongst whom Boges had taken his seat, were rising from table, the door opened, and a vision appeared, which drew prolonged exclamation of surprise from all the Persians present. Nitetis, clad in the glorious apparel of a Median princess, proud in the consciousness of her triumphant beauty, and yet blushing like a young girl at the wondering admiration of her friends, stood before them.

The attendants involuntarily fell on their faces before her, according to the custom of the Asiatics, and the noble Achæmenidæ bowed low and reverentially; for it seemed as if Nitetis has laid aside all her former bashfulness and timidity with her simple Egyptian dress, and with the splendid silken garments of a Persian princess, flashing as they were with gold and

221. Horodotus V. 14. 49–52. Xenoph, *Cyrop.* VIII. 6. 9. Plutarch, *Artaxerxes*, 25. Persian milestones are still to be found among the ruins of the old king's road, which led from Nineveh to Ecbatana. The Kurds call them *keli-Shin* (blue pillars). W. Vaux, *Nineveh and Persepolis*. p. 330.

jewels, had clothed herself in the majesty of a queen.

The deep reverence paid by all present seemed agreeable to her, and thanking her admiring friends by a gracious wave of the hand, she turned to the chief of the eunuchs[222] and said in a kind tone but mingled with a touch of pride; "Thou hast performed thy mission well; I am content with the raiment and the slaves that thou hast provided and shall commend thy circumspection to the king, my husband. Receive this gold chain in the meanwhile, as a token of my gratitude."

The eunuch kissed the hem of her garment, and accepted the gift in silence. This man, hitherto omnipotent in his office, had never before encountered such pride in any of the women committed to his charge. Up to the present time all Cambyses' wives had been Asiatics, and, well aware of the unlimited power of the chief of the eunuchs, had used every means within their reach to secure his favor by flattery and submission.

Boges now made a second obeisance before Nitetis, of which, however, she took no notice, and turning to Crœsus said: "Neither words nor gifts could ever suffice to express my gratitude to you, kindest of friends, for, if my future life at the court of Persia prove, I will not venture to say a happy, but even a peaceful one, it is to you alone that I shall owe it. Still, take this ring. It has never left my finger since I quitted Egypt, and it has a significance far beyond its outward worth. Pythagoras, the noblest of the Greeks, gave it to my

222. In the book of Esther 2. 12. 15. a chief of the eunuchs for the king's wives is spoken of, and another for the concubines. But in the reign of Cambyses, which was so much earlier, we have allowed Boges to fill both these offices.

mother, when he was tarrying in Egypt to learn the wisdom of our priests, and it was her parting gift to me. The number seven is engraved upon the simple stone. This indivisible number represents perfect health, both to soul and body,[223] for health is likewise one and indivisible. The sickness of one member is the sickness of all; one evil thought, allowed to take up its abode within our heart, destroys the entire harmony of the soul. When you see this seven therefore, let it recall my heart's wish that you may ever enjoy undisturbed bodily health, and long retain that loving gentleness which has made you the most virtuous, and therefore the healthiest of men. No thanks, my father, for even if I could restore to Crœsus all the treasures that he once possessed, I should still remain his debtor. Gyges, to you I give this Lydian lyre; let its tones recall the giver to your memory. For you, Zopyrus, I have a golden chain; I have witnessed that you are the most faithful of friends; and we Egyptians are accustomed to place cords and bands in the hands of our lovely Hathor, the goddess of love and friendship, as symbols of her captivating and enchaining attributes.* As Darius has studied the wisdom of Egypt and the signs of the starry heavens, I beg him to take this circlet of gold, on which a skilful hand has traced the signs of the Zodiac.[224] And lastly, to my dear brother-in-law Bartja

223. Seven, the "motherless" number, which has no factor below ten. Zeller, *Geschichte der Philosophie der Griechen*, p. 232 and 298.

224. Diodorus (I. 49.) tells, that in the tomb of Osymandyas (palace of Rameses II. at Thebes) there lay a circle of gold, one ell thick and 365 ells in circumference, containing a complete astronomical calendar. The circle of the zodiac from Dendera, which is now in Paris,—an astronomical ceiling painting, which was believed at the time of its discovery to be of great age, is not nearly so ancient as was supposed, dating only from the end of the Ptolemaic dynasty. Le-

* See note 55.

I commit the most precious jewel in my possession—this amulet of blue stone.* My sister Tachot hung it round my neck as I kissed her on the last night before we parted; she told me it could bring to its wearer the sweet bliss of love. And then, Bartja, she wept! I do not know of whom she was thinking in that moment, but I hope I am acting according to her wishes in giving you her precious jewel. Take it as a gift from Tachot, and sometimes call to mind our games in the Sais gardens."

Thus far she had been speaking Greek, but now, addressing the attendants who remained standing in an attitude of deep reverence, she began in broken Persian: "Accept my thanks also. In Babylon you shall receive a thousand gold staters."[225] Then turning to Boges, she added: "Let this sum be distributed among the attendants at latest by the day after to-morrow. Take me to my carriage, Crœsus."

The old king hastened to do her bidding, and as he was leading her thither she pressed his arm and whispered gently, "Are you pleased with me, my father?"

"I tell you, girl," the old man answered, "that no

tronne was the first to estimate it correctly. See Lepsius, *Chron.* p. 63. and Lauth, *les zodiaques de Dendéra.* Munich 1865.

225. These staters were the earliest stamped coins, according to Herodotus I. 94. But Böckh and Brandis have proved that the Assyrians had fixed weights and measures much earlier. The Persian Daricus was probably first coined in the reign of Darius, though Suidas maintains that they took their name from a former Darius. It may have been derived from the word "Zara," gold. The Daricus was worth a little more than twenty-four shillings. Böckh, *Metrologie.* p. 46. 51. 129. and following. Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums* II. p. 642. We are indebted to Brandis for the latest and most successful researches on the subject of Eastern measures of every kind.

* Lapis-lazuli was a favorite stone among the ancient Egyptians. Turquoises have been found in the present day by an Englishman named Macdonald, in the old mines on the Sinaitic peninsular. See *Brugsch, Wanderungen zu den Türkisminen.*

one but the king's mother can ever be your equal at this court, for a true and queenly pride reigns on your brow, and you have the power of using small means to effect great ends. Believe me, the smallest gift, chosen and bestowed as you can choose and bestow, gives more pleasure to a noble mind than heaps of treasure merely cast down at his feet. The Persians are accustomed to present and receive costly gifts. They understand already how to enrich their friends, but you can teach them to impart a joy with every gift. How beautiful you are to-day! Are your cushions to your mind, or would you like a higher seat? But what is that? There are clouds of dust in the direction of the city. Cambyses is surely coming to meet you! Courage, my daughter. Above all try to meet his gaze and respond to it. Very few can bear the lightning glance of those eyes, but, if you can return it freely and fearlessly, you have conquered. Fear nothing, my child, and may Aphrodite adorn you with her most glorious beauty! My friends, we must start, I think the king himself is coming." Nitetis sat erect in her splendid, gilded carriage; her hands were pressed on her throbbing heart. The clouds of dust came nearer and nearer, her eye caught the flash of weapons like lightning across a stormy sky. The clouds parted, she could see single figures for a moment, but soon lost them as the road wound behind some thickets and shrubs. Suddenly the troop of horsemen appeared in full gallop only a hundred paces before her, and distinctly visible.

Her first impression was of a motley mass of steeds and men, glittering in purple, gold, silver and jewels. It consisted in reality of a troop of more than two

hundred horsemen mounted on pure white Nicæan horses, whose bridles and saddle-cloths were covered with bells and bosses, feathers, fringes, and embroidery.[226] Their leader rode a powerful coal-black charger, which even the strong will and hand of his rider could not always curb, though in the end his enormous strength proved him the man to tame even this fiery animal. This rider, beneath whose weight the powerful steed trembled and panted, wore a vesture of scarlet and white, thickly embroidered with eagles and falcons in silver.[227] The lower part of his dress was purple, and his boots of yellow leather. He wore a golden girdle; in this hung a short dagger-like sword, the hilt and scabbard of which were thickly studded with jewels. The remaining ornaments of his dress resembled those we have described as worn by Bartja, and the blue and white fillet of the Achæmenidæ was bound around the tiara, which surmounted a mass of thick curls, black as ebony. The lower part of his face was concealed by an immense beard. His features were pale and immovable, but the eyes, (more intensely black, if possible, than either hair or beard), glowed with a fire that was rather scorching than warming. A deep, fiery-red scar, given by the sword of a Massagetan warrior, crossed his high forehead, arched nose and thin upper lip. His whole demeanor expressed great power and unbounded pride.

Nitetis' gaze was at once riveted by this man. She had never seen any one like him before, and he exercised

226. From the pictures in H. Gosse's *Assyria* p. 238. and Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon* p. 178. 340. 450.

227. Curtius III. 3. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 3. 7. Aeschylus, *Persians* 835. 836. The king's dress and ornaments were worth 12,000 talents, or £2,250,000 according to Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 24.

a strange fascination over her. The expression of indomitable pride, worn by his features, seemed to her to represent a manly nature which the whole world, but she herself above all others, was created to serve. She felt afraid, and yet her true woman's heart longed to lean upon his strength as the vine upon the elm. She could not be quite sure whether she had thus pictured to herself the father of all evil, the fearful Seth,* or the great god Ammon, the giver of light.

The deepest pallor and the brightest color flitted by turns across her lovely face, like the light and shadow when clouds pass swiftly over a sunny noonday sky. She had quite forgotten the advice of her fatherly old friend, and yet, when Cambyses brought his unruly, chafing steed to a stand by the side of her carriage, she gazed breathless into the fiery eyes of this man and felt at once that he was the king, though no one had told her so.

The stern face of this ruler of half the known world relaxed, as Nitetis, moved by an unaccountable impulse, continued to bear his piercing gaze. At last he waved his hand to her in token of welcome, and then rode on to her escort, who had alighted from their horses and were awaiting him, some having cast themselves down in the dust, and others, after the Persian manner, standing in an attitude of deep reverence, their hands concealed in the wide sleeves of their robes.

He sprang from his horse, an example which was followed at once by his entire suite. The attendants, with the speed of thought, spread a rich purple carpet on the highway, lest the foot of the king should come in contact with the dust of the earth, and then Cambyses

* See note 147.

proceeded to salute his friends and relations by offering them his mouth to kiss.

He shook Crœsus by the right hand, commanding him to remount and accompany him to the carriage, as interpreter between himself and Nitetis.

In an instant his highest office-bearers were at hand to lift the king once more on to his horse, and at a single nod from their lord, the train was again in motion.

Cambyses and Crœsus rode by the side of the carriage.

"She is beautiful, and pleases me well," began the king. "Interpret faithfully all her answers, for I understand only the Persian, Assyrian and Median tongues."

Nitetis caught and understood these words. A feeling of intense joy stole into her heart, and before Crœsus could answer, she began softly in broken Persian and blushing deeply: "Blessed be the gods, who have caused me to find favor in thine eyes. I am not ignorant of the speech of my lord, for the noble Crœsus has instructed me in the Persian language during our long journey. Forgive, if my sentences be broken and imperfect; the time was short, and my capacity only that of a poor and simple maiden.[228]

A smile passed over the usually serious mouth of Cambyses. His vanity was flattered by Nitetis' desire to win his approbation, and, accustomed as he was to see women grow up in idleness and ignorance, thinking of nothing but finery and intrigue, her persevering industry seemed to him both wonderful and praiseworthy. So he answered with evident satisfaction: "I

228. Diodorus tells us that Themistocles learnt the Persian language during the journey to Susa. We are not, therefore, requiring an impossibility of Nitetis.

rejoice that we can speak without an interpreter. Persevere in learning the beautiful language of my forefathers. Crœsus, who sits at my table, shall still remain your instructor."

"Your command confers happiness!" exclaimed the old man. "No more eager or thankful pupil could be found, than the daughter of Amasis."

"She justifies the ancient report of the wisdom of Egypt," answered the king, "and I can believe that she will quickly understand and receive into her soul the religious instructions of our Magi."

Nitetis dropped her earnest gaze. Her fears were being realized. She would be compelled to serve strange gods.

But her emotion passed unnoticed by Cambyses, who went on speaking: "My mother Kassandane will tell you the duties expected from my wives. To-morrow I myself will lead you to her. The words, which you innocently chanced to hear, I now repeat; you please me well. Do nothing to alienate my affection. We will try to make our country agreeable, and, as your friend, I counsel you to treat Boges whom I sent as my forerunner, in a kind and friendly manner. As head over the house of the women, you will have to conform to his will in many things."

"Though he be head over the house of the women," answered Nitetis, "surely your wife is bound to obey no other earthly will than yours. Your slightest look shall be for me a command; but remember that I am a king's daughter, that in my native land the weaker and the stronger sex have equal rights, and that the same pride reigns in my breast, which I see kindling in your eyes, my lord and king! My obedience to you, my husband

and my ruler, shall be that of a slave, but I can never stoop to sue for the favor, or obey the orders of a venal servant, the most unmanly of his kind!"

Cambyses' wonder and satisfaction increased. He had never heard any woman speak in this way before, except his mother; the clever way in which Nitetis acknowledged, and laid stress on, his right to command her every act, was very flattering to his self-love, and her pride found an echo in his own haughty disposition. He nodded approvingly and answered: "You have spoken well. A separate dwelling shall be appointed you. I, and no one else, will prescribe your rules of life and conduct. This day the pleasant palace on the hanging-gardens shall be prepared for your reception."

"A thousand, thousand thanks," cried Nitetis. "You little know the blessing you are bestowing in this permission. Again and again I have begged your brother Bartja to repeat the story of these gardens, and the love of the king who raised that verdant and blooming hill, pleased us better than all the other glories of your vast domains."

"To-morrow," answered the king, "you can enter your new abode. But tell me now how my messengers pleased you and your countrymen."

"How can you ask? Who could know the noble Crœsus without loving him? Who could fail to admire the beauty of the young heroes, your friends? They have all become dear to us, but your handsome brother Bartja especially, won all hearts. The Egyptians have no love for strangers, and yet the gaping crowd would burst into a murmur of admiration, when his beautiful face appeared among them."

At these words the king's brow darkened; he struck

his horse so sharply that the creature reared, and then turning it quickly round he galloped to the front and soon reached the walls of Babylon.

Though Nitetis had been brought up among the huge temples and palaces of Egypt, she was still astonished at the size and grandeur of this gigantic city.

Its walls seemed impregnable; they measured more than seventy-five feet* in height and their breadth was so great, that two chariots could conveniently drive abreast upon them. These mighty defences were crowned and strengthened by two hundred and fifty high towers, and even these would have been insufficient, if Babylon had not been protected on one side by impassable morasses. The gigantic city lay on both shores of the Euphrates. It was more than forty miles in circumference, and its walls enclosed buildings surpassing in size and grandeur even the Pyramids and the temples of Thebes.[229]

The mighty gates of brass, through which the royal train entered the city, had opened wide to receive this noble company. This entrance was defended on each side by a strong tower, and before each of these towers lay, as warder, a gigantic winged bull carved in stone,

229. These numbers and measurements are taken partly from Herodotus, partly from Diodorus, Strabo and Arrian. And even the ruins of this giant city, writes Layard, are such as to allow a very fair conclusion of its enormous size. Layard I. 1. Gosse, *Assyria*. Ritter, *Erdkunde* XI. p. 900. and many others. Aristotle (*Polit.* III. 1.) says Babylon's dimensions were not those of a city, but of a nation.

* Fifty ells. The Greek ell (πηχυς) is equal to one foot and a half English.

with a human head, bearded and solemn.[230] Nitetis gazed at these gates in astonishment, and then a joyful smile lighted up her face, as she looked up the long broad street so brightly and beautifully decorated to welcome her.

The moment they beheld the king and the gilded carriage, the multitude burst into loud shouts of joy, but when Bartja, the people's darling, came in sight, the shouts rose to thunder-peals and shrieks of delight, which seemed as if they would never end. It was long since the populace had seen Cambyses, for in accordance with Median customs the king seldom appeared in public Like the Deity, he was to govern invisibly, and his occasional appearance before the nation to be looked upon as a festival and occasion of rejoicing. Thus all Babylon had come out to-day to look upon their awful ruler and to welcome their favorite Bartja on his return. The windows were crowded with eager, curious women, who threw flowers before the approaching train, or poured sweet perfumes from above as they passed by. The pavement was thickly strewn with myrtle and palm branches, trees of different kinds had been placed before the house-doors, carpets and gay cloths hung from the windows, garlands of flowers were wreathed from house to house, fragrant odors of incense and sandal-wood perfumed the air, and the way was lined with thousands of gaping Babylonians dressed in white

230. J. Bonomi, *Nineveh and its palaces*. fig. 33. and many pictures in Layard's works. Originals and casts of ancient Assyrian works of art in the British Museum, the Louvre in Paris, and (more especially casts) in the New Museum, Berlin. The Assyrian sphinxes were probably intended as symbols of the omnipotence of the Deity. The highest degree of strength was symbolized by the body of a bull, the highest intelligence by the head of a man, and the greatest swiftness by the eagle's wings.

linen shirts, gaily-colored woollen petticoats and short cloaks, and carrying long staves headed with pomegranates, birds, or roses, of gold or silver.[231]

The streets through which the procession moved were broad and straight, the houses on either side, built of brick, tall and handsome.[232] Towering above everything else, and visible from all points, rose the gigantic temple of Bel. Its colossal staircase, like a huge serpent, wound round and round the ever-diminishing series of stories composing the tower, until it reached the summit crowned by the sanctuary itself.[233]

The procession approached the royal palace,[234] This

231. Herodotus I. 195. Ezekiel 23. 15. This dress too agrees well with the pictures of Assyrians, represented on the Egyptian monuments among the foreign nations. Printed in colors in Rosellini's *Mon. stor. dell' Egitto* II. Pl. 157. and 158. and in Lepsius' *Denkmäler*. In the celebrated enumeration of the campaigns of Thotmes III. (in Lepsius) mention is made of Assuri and Babel, perhaps Assyria and Babylon. It runs thus: "In the year 40 the tribute of the kings of Assuri (Assyria?) was a great stone of lapis-lazuli weighing 20 minæ and 9 aces, of beautiful lapis-lazuli from Bebel (Babylon?), vases from Assuri &c." The "statistical monument at Karnak," recently published by Mariette Bey and used by Brugsch and A. Wiedemann.

232. Herodotus I. 180.

233. This temple of Bel, which many consider may have been the tower of Babel of Genesis XI., is mentioned by Herodotus I. 181. 182. 183. Diodorus II. 8. 9. (Ktesias), Strabo 738 and many other ancient writers. The people living in its neighborhood now call the ruins *Birs Nimrud*, the castle of Nimrod. In the text we have reconstructed it as far as possible from the accounts of classical writers. The first story, which is still standing, in the midst of a heap of ruins, is 260 feet high. The walls surrounding the tower are said to be still clearly recognizable, and were 4000 feet long and 3000 broad. Ritter, *Erdkunde* XI. 877. Layard pp. 494–499. Rich. *Collected memoirs. First memoir* p. 37. The immense building must have been in its greatest splendor at the time of our tale, as we know from Josephus (Ant. X. 11. 1.) that Nebuchadnezzar added to and finished it in a magnificent manner; and Josephus' report is confirmed by a cuneiform inscription translated by Rawlinson, *Journal of Royal As. Society* XII. 2. p. 476. The foundation of the temple seems to have been square.

234. This palace or castle is said to have been built by Nebuchadnezzar too. At least the bricks which have been found among its ruins at Hillah bear his name in cuneiform characters. Many fragments of glazed reliefs have been found there also.

corresponded in its enormous size to the rest of the vast city. The walls surrounding it were covered with gaily-colored and glazed representations of strange figures made up of human beings, birds, quadrupeds and fishes; hunting-scenes, battles and solemn processions. By the side of the river towards the north, rose the hanging-gardens,[235] and the smaller palace lay toward the east on the other bank of the Euphrates, connected with the larger one by the wondrous erection, a firm bridge of stone.

Our train passed on through the brazen gates of three of the walls surrounding the palace, and then halted. Nitetis was lifted from her carriage by bearers; she was at last in her new home, and soon after in the apartments of the women's house assigned to her temporary use.

Cambyses, Bartja and their friends already known to us, were still standing in the gaily-carpeted court of the palace, surrounded by at least a hundred splendid dignitaries in magnificent dresses, when suddenly a sound of loud female voices was heard, and a lovely Persian girl richly dressed, her thick fair hair profusely wreathed with pearls, rushed into the court, pursued by several women older than herself. She ran up to the group of men; Cambyses with a smile placed himself in her path, but the impetuous girl slipped adroitly past

235. See note 159. A heap of debris, 2400 ft. long and 1800 broad, now called *el Kasr* "the palace" stretches along the bank of the Euphrates. "On the north side of this artificial hill, on one of the highest points stands a lonely tamarisk, looking down on the river beneath. The tree is very old and large, and the Arabs say is the only one now remaining from the hanging-gardens of Semiramis." Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums* I. p. 572. Diodorus (II. 10.) says the hanging-gardens were in terraces like the seats in a theatre. Layard found a tablet with bass-reliefs of a garden supported on columns. *Nineveh and Babylon*. p. 233. Pl. XI. B. in Zenker's translation.

him, and in another moment was hanging on Bartja's neck, crying and laughing by turns.

The attendants in pursuit prostrated themselves at a respectful distance, but Cambyses, on seeing the caresses lavished by the young girl on her newly-returned brother, cried: "For shame, Atossa! remember that since you began to wear ear-rings you have ceased to be a child![236] It is right that you should rejoice to see your brother again, but a king's daughter must never forget what is due to her rank, even in her greatest joy. Go back to your mother directly. I see your attendants waiting yonder. Go and tell them, that as this is a day of rejoicing I will allow your heedless conduct to pass unpunished, but the next time you appear unbidden in these apartments, which none may enter without permission, I shall tell Boges to keep you twelve days in confinement. Remember this, thoughtless child, and tell our mother, Bartja and I are coming to visit her. Now give me a kiss. You will not? We shall see, capricious little one!" And so saying the king sprang towards his refractory little sister, and seizing both her hands in one of his own, bent back her charming head with the other and kissed her in spite of her resistance. She screamed from the violence of his grasp, and ran away crying to her attendants, who took her back to her apartments.

When Atossa had disappeared, Bartja said; "You

236. Ear-rings were given to the Persian girls in their fifteenth year, the marriageable age. *Vendîd. Fargard* XIV. 66. At this age too boys as well as girls were obliged to wear the sacred cord, *Kuçti* or *Kosti* as a girdle; and were only allowed to unloose it in the night. The making of this cord is attended with many ceremonies, even among the Persians of our own day. Seventy-two threads must be employed, but black wool is prohibited. Spiegel, *Avesta* II. Einleitung XXIII.

were too rough with the little one, Cambyses. She screamed with pain!"

Once more the king's face clouded, but suppressing the harsh words which trembled on his lips, he only answered, turning towards the house: "Let us come to our mother now; she begged me to bring you as soon as you arrived. The women, as usual, are all impatience. Nitetis told me your rosy cheeks and fair curls had bewitched the Egyptian women too. I would advise you to pray betimes to Mithras* for eternal youth, and for his protection against the wrinkles of age!"

"Do you mean to imply by these words that I have no virtues which could make an old age beautiful?" asked Bartja.

"I explain my words to no one. Come."

"But I ask for an opportunity of proving, that I am inferior to none of my nation in manly qualities."

"For that matter, the shouts of the Babylonians to-day will have been proof enough, that deeds are not wanted from you, in order to win their admiration."

"Cambyses!"

"Now come! We are just on the eve of a war with the Massagetæ; there you will have a good opportunity of proving what you are worth."

A few minutes later, and Bartja was in the arms of his blind mother. She had been waiting for her darling's arrival with a beating heart, and in the joy of hearing his voice once more, and of being able to lay her hands again on that beloved head, she forgot everything else—even her first-born son who stood by smiling bitterly, as he watched the rich and boundless

* God of the sun and of light among the Persians.

stream of a mother's love flowing out to his younger brother.

Cambyses had been spoiled from his earliest infancy. Every wish had been fulfilled, every look regarded as a command; and thus he grew up totally unable to brook contradiction, giving way to the most violent anger if any of his subjects (and he knew no human beings who were not his subjects) dared to oppose him.

His father Cyrus, conqueror of half the world—the man whose genius had raised Persia from a small nation to the summit of earthly greatness—who had secured for himself the reverence and admiration of countless subjugated tribes—this great king was incapable of carrying out in his own small family-circle the system of education he had so successfully adopted towards entire countries.[237] He could see nought else in Cambyses but the future king of Persia, and commanded his subjects to pay him an unquestioning obedience, entirely forgetful of the fact that he who is to govern well must begin by learning to obey.

Cambyses had been the first-born son of Kassandane, the wife whom Cyrus had loved and married young; three daughters followed, and at last, fifteen years later, Bartja had come into the world. Their eldest son had already outgrown his parents' caresses, when this little child appeared to engross all their care and love. His gentle, affectionate and clinging nature made him the darling of both father and mother: Cambyses was treated with consideration by his parents, but their love was for Bartja. Cambyses was brave;

237. The same remark is to be found in Seneca, *De Ira* and in Plato, *Legg.* 691. and 695.

he distinguished himself often in the field, but his disposition was haughty and imperious; men served him with fear and trembling, while Bartja, ever sociable and sympathizing, converted all his companions into loving friends. As to the mass of the people, they feared the king, and trembled when he drew near, notwithstanding the lavish manner in which he showered rich gifts around him; but they loved Bartja, and believed they saw in him the image of the great Cyrus the "Father of his people."

Cambyses knew well that all this love, so freely given to Bartja, was not to be bought. He did not hate his younger brother, but he felt annoyed that a youth who had as yet done nothing to distinguish himself, should be honored and revered as if he were already a hero and public benefactor. Whatever annoyed or displeased him he considered must be wrong; where he disapproved he did not spare his censures, and from his very childhood, Cambyses' reproofs had been dreaded even by the mighty.

The enthusiastic shouts of the populace, the overflowing love of his mother and sister, and above all, the warm encomiums expressed by Nitetis, had excited a jealousy which his pride had never allowed hitherto. Nitetis had taken his fancy in a remarkable degree. This daughter of a powerful monarch, like himself disdaining everything mean and inferior, had yet acknowledged him to be her superior, and to win his favor had not shrunk from the laborious task of mastering his native language. These qualities, added to her peculiar style of beauty, which excited his admiration from its rare novelty, half Egyptian half Greek, (her mother having been a Greek), had not failed to make a deep

impression on him. But she had been liberal in her praise of Bartja;—that was enough to disturb Cambyses' mind and prepare the way for jealousy.

As he and his brother were leaving the women's apartments, Cambyses adopted a hasty resolution and exclaimed: "You asked me just now for an opportunity of proving your courage. I will not refuse. The Tapuri have risen; I have sent troops to the frontier. Go to Rhagae, take the command and show what you are worth."

"Thanks, brother," cried Bartja. "May I take my friends, Darius, Gyges and Zopyrus with me?"

"That favor shall be granted too. I hope you will all do your duty bravely and promptly, that you may be back in three months to join the main army in the expedition of revenge on the Massagetæ. It will take place in spring."

"I will start to-morrow."

"Then farewell."

"If Auramazda should spare my life and I should return victorious, will you promise to grant me one favor?"

"Yes, I will."

"Now, then, I feel confident of victory, even if I should have to stand with a thousand men against ten thousand of the enemy." Bartja's eyes sparkled, he was thinking of Sappho.

"Well," answered his brother, "I shall be very glad if your actions bear out these glowing words. But stop; I have something more to say. You are now twenty years of age; you must marry. Roxana, daughter of the noble Hydarnes, is marriageable, and is said to be beautiful. Her birth makes her a fitting bride for you."

"Oh! brother, do not speak of marriage; I . . ."

"You must marry, for I have no children."

"But you are still young; you will not remain childless. Besides, I do not say that I will never marry. Do not be angry, but just now, when I am to prove my courage, I would rather hear nothing about women."

"Well, then, you must marry Roxana when you return from the North. But I should advise you to take her with you to the field. A Persian generally fights better if he knows that, beside his most precious treasures, he has a beautiful woman in his tent to defend.[238]

"Spare me this one command, my brother. I conjure thee, by the soul of our father, not to inflict on me a wife of whom I know nothing, and never wish to know. Give Roxana to Zopyrus, who is so fond of women, or to Darius or Bessus, who are related to her father Hydarnes. I cannot love her, and should be miserable . . ."

Cambyses interrupted him with a laugh, exclaiming: "Did you learn these notions in Egypt, where it is the custom to be contented with one wife? In truth, I have long repented having sent a boy like you abroad. I am not accustomed to bear contradiction, and shall listen to no excuses after the war. This once I will allow you to go to the field without a wife. I will not force you to do what, in your opinion, might endanger your valor. But it seems to me that you have other and more secret reasons for refusing my brotherly proposal. If that is the case, I am sorry for you. However, for the present, you can depart, but after the war I will hear no remonstrances. You know me."

238. Herodotus VII. 83. 187. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 10.

"Perhaps after the war I may ask for the very thing, which I am refusing now—but never for Roxana! It is just as unwise to try to make a man happy by force as it is wicked to compel him to be unhappy, and I thank you for granting my request."

"Don't try my powers of yielding too often!—How happy you look! I really believe you are in love with some one woman by whose side all the others have lost their charms."

Bartja blushed to his temples, and seizing his brother's hand, exclaimed: "Ask no further now, accept my thanks once more, and farewell. May I bid Nitetis farewell too, when I have taken leave of our mother and Atossa?"

Cambyses bit his lip, looked searchingly into Bartja's face, and finding that the boy grew uneasy under his glance, exclaimed abruptly and angrily: "Your first business is to hasten to the Tapuri. My wife needs your care no longer; she has other protectors now."

So saying he turned his back on his brother and passed on into the great hall, blazing with gold, purple and jewels, where the chiefs of the army, satraps, judges, treasurers, secretaries, counsellors, eunuchs, door-keepers, introducers of strangers, chamberlains, keepers of the wardrobe, dressers, cup-bearers, equerries, masters of the chase, physicians, eyes and ears of the king, ambassadors and plenipotentiaries of all descriptions[239] were in waiting for him.

239. The "eyes and ears" of the king may be compared to our police-ministers. Darius may have borrowed the name from Egypt, where such titles as "the 2 eyes of the king for Upper Egypt, the 2 ears of the king for Lower Egypt" are to be found on the earlier monuments, for instance in the tomb of Amen em heb at Abd el Qurnah. And in Herodotus II. 114. the boy Cyrus calls one of his playfellows ὀφθαλμὸν βασιλέως, "the eye of the king." Herod. (I. 100.)

The king was preceded by heralds bearing staves, and followed by a host of fan, sedan and footstool-bearers, men carrying carpets, and secretaries who the moment he uttered a command, or even indicated a concession, a punishment or a reward, hastened to note it down and at once hand it over to the officials empowered to execute his decrees.

In the middle of the brilliantly-lighted hall stood a gilded table, which looked as if it must give way beneath the mass of gold and silver vessels, plates, cups and bowls which were arranged with great order upon it. The king's private table, the service on which was of immense worth and beauty, was placed in an apartment opening out of the large hall, and separated from it by purple hangings. These concealed him from the gaze of the revellers, but did not prevent their every movement from being watched by his eye.[240] It was an object of the highest ambition to be one of those who ate at the king's table, and even he to whom a portion was sent might deem himself a highly-favored man.

As Cambyses entered the hall, nearly every one present prostrated themselves before him; his relations alone, distinguished by the blue and white fillet on the tiara, contented themselves with a deferential obeisance.

After the king had seated himself in his private apartment, the rest of the company took their places, and then a tremendous revel began. Animals, roasted whole, were placed on the table, and, when hunger was

makes the system of espionage by the police begin under Dejoces, in whose time the country was full of spies and listeners. The other court-officers are mentioned by different ancient writers and enumerated in detail by Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums* II. p. 606. and 614.

240. Heracl. *Cum. Fragm.* I. Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 5. tells, that the king's mother and his favorite wife had seats at his own table.

appeased, several courses of the rarest delicacies followed, celebrated in later times even among the Greeks under the name of "Persian dessert."[241]

Slaves then entered to remove the remains of the food. Others brought in immense jugs of wine, the king left his own apartment, took his seat at the head of the table, numerous cup-bearers filled the golden drinking-cups in the most graceful manner, first tasting the wine to prove that it was free from poison, and soon one of those drinking-bouts had begun under the best auspices, at which, a century or two later, Alexander the Great, forgot not only moderation but even friendship itself.

Cambyses was unwontedly silent. The suspicion had entered his mind, that Bartja loved Nitetis. Why had he, contrary to all custom, so decidedly refused to marry a noble and beautiful girl, when his brother's childlessness rendered marriage an evident and urgent duty for him? Why had he wished to see the Egyptian princess again before leaving Babylon? and blushed as he expressed that wish? and why had she, almost without being asked, praised him so warmly?

It is well that he is going, thought the king; at least he shall not rob me of her love. If he were not my brother I would send him to a place from whence none can return.

After midnight he broke up the banquet. Boges appeared to conduct him to the Harem, which he was

241. Herodotus (I. 133.) writes that the Persians fancied the Greeks' hunger was never satisfied, because nothing special was brought to the table at the end of the meal. We read in modern books of travels, that the Persians are still very fond of delicacies. Brugsch, *Reise nach Persien*. J. v. Hammer gives quotations from a poet named Abu Ishak, who only wrote in praise of dainties.

accustomed to visit at this hour, when sufficiently sober.

"Phædime awaits you with impatience," said the eunuch.

"Let her wait!" was the king's answer. "Have you given orders that the palace on the hanging-gardens shall be set in order?"

"It will be ready for occupation to-morrow."

"What apartments have been assigned to the Egyptian Princess?"

"Those formerly occupied by the second wife of your father Cyrus, the deceased Amytis."

"That is well. Nitetis is to be treated with the greatest respect, and to receive no commands even from yourself, but such as I give you for her."

Boges bowed low.

"See that no one, not even Crœsus, has admission to her before my . . . before I give further orders."

"Crœsus was with her this evening."

"What may have been his business with my wife?"

"I do not know, for I do not understand the Greek language, but I heard the name of Bartja several times, and it seemed to me that the Egyptian had received sorrowful intelligence. She was looking very sad when I came, after Crœsus had left, to inquire if she had any commands for me."

"May Ahriman blast thy tongue," muttered the king, and then turning his back on the eunuch he followed the torch-bearers and attendants, who were in waiting to disrobe him, to his own private apartments.

At noon on the following day, Bartja, accompanied

by his friends and a troop of attendants, started on horseback for the frontier. Crœsus went with the young warriors as far as the city gates, and as their last farewells and embraces were being exchanged, Bartja whispered to his old friend: "If the messenger from Egypt should have a letter for me in his bag, will you send it on?"

"Shall you be able to decipher the Greek writing?"

"Gyges and love will help me!"

"When I told Nitetis of your departure she begged me to wish you farewell, and tell you not to forget Egypt."

"I am not likely to do that."

"The gods take thee into their care, my son. Be prudent, do not risk your life heedlessly, but remember that it is no longer only your own. Exercise the gentleness of a father towards the rebels; they did not rise in mere self-will, but to gain their freedom, the most precious possession of mankind. Remember, too, that to shew mercy is better than to shed blood; the sword killeth, but the favor of the ruler bringeth joy and happiness. Conclude the war as speedily as possible, for war is a perversion of nature; in peace the sons outlive the fathers, but in war the fathers live to mourn for their slain sons. Farewell, my young heroes, go forward and conquer!"

CHAPTER XIII.

CAMBYSES passed a sleepless night. The feeling of jealousy, so totally new to him, increased his desire to possess Nitetis, but he dared not take her as his wife yet, as the Persian law forbade the king to marry a foreign wife,[242] until she had become familiar with the customs of Iran and confessed herself a disciple of Zoroaster.[243]

242. In the book of Esther, this year is said to have been specially devoted to initiating the women in the use of ointments, spices and perfumes. Surely for such a purpose a year was too long; may it not probably have been used for instructing the foreign women in the demands made upon them by the laws of Zoroaster? In confirmation of this conjecture we quote the following passage—*Vendidad Farg.* XVIII. 123. 124. literally translated:

"Who takes the greatest vengeance on thee, thou Ahura-Mazda? who is thy worst torment?"

And Ahura-Mazda answers:

"He who mingles the seed of the righteous and the wicked, of those who honor the Dævas and those who honor them not, the sinners and the holy ones; those who take in marriage worshippers of the Dævas ought to be slain sooner than venomous serpents." *Vend.* XVIII. 123. The privilege of becoming a Mazdayaçnas was granted to foreigners, though the Mazdayaçnas themselves did not make proselytes, considering it a great distinction to have been born in the faith. During the dynasty of the Sassanidæ indeed, the professors of other religions were fiercely persecuted.

243. Zoroaster, really Zarathustra or Zerethoschtro, was one of the greatest among founders of new religions and lawgivers. His name signified "golden star" according to Anquetil du Perron. But this interpretation is as doubtful, as the many others which have been attempted. An appropriate one is given in the essay by Kern quoted below, from *zara* golden, and *thwistra* glittering; thus "the goldglittering one" χρυσοφάης. It is uncertain whether he was born in Bactria, Media or Persia, Anquetil thinks in Urmi, a town in Aderbaijan. His father's name was Poroschasp, his mother's Dogdo, and his family boasted of royal descent. The time of his birth is very,—Spiegel says "hopelessly"—dark. Anquetil, and many other scholars would place it in the reign of Darius, a view which has been proved to be incorrect by Spiegel, Duncker and v. Schack in his introduction

According to this law a whole year must pass before Nitetis could become the wife of a Persian monarch? but what was the law to Cambyses? In his eyes the law was embodied in his own person, and in his opinion three months would be amply sufficient to initiate Nitetis in the Magian mysteries, after which process she could become his bride.

To-day his other wives seemed hateful, even loathsome, to him. From Cambyses' earliest youth his house had been carefully provided with women. Beautiful girls from all parts of Asia, black-eyed Armenians, dazzlingly fair maidens from the Caucasus, delicate girls from the shores of the Ganges, luxurious Babylonian women, golden-haired Persians and the effeminate daughters of the Median plains; indeed many of the noblest Achæmenidæ had given him their daughters in marriage.

Phædime, the daughter of Otanes, and niece of his own mother Kassandane, had been Cambyses' favorite wife hitherto, or at least the only one of whom it could be said that she was more to him than a purchased slave would have been. But even she, in his present sated and disgusted state of feeling, seemed vulgar and contemptible, especially when he thought of Nitetis.

to the translation of Firdusi. We cannot enter more minutely into this difficult question here, but venture to assure our readers, that the religion of Zoroaster was in force at the time of our tale. The different accounts given of the founder himself are so uncertain, that lately a young Dutchman, Professor Kern, was able to attempt to disprove the existence of Zoroaster entirely and reduce him to the hero of a myth. This treatise, full of information and written with great ability, is to be found in the *Verslagen en mideedeelingen der k. akad. v. wetenschapen. Afdeeling Letterkunde. Amsterdam* 1867. p. 132. Justi in his handbook of the Zend language, maintains an opposite view. The Avesta was probably not completed till later, about the time of Artaxerxes. It contained 21 *Nosk* or parts. The Vendidad alone has come down to us complete.

The Egyptian seemed formed of nobler, better stuff than they all. They were flattering, coaxing girls; Nitetis was a queen. They humbled themselves in the dust at his feet; but when he thought of Nitetis, he beheld her erect, standing before him, on the same proud level as himself. He determined that from henceforth she should not only occupy Phædime's place, but should be to him what Kassandane had been to his father Cyrus.

She was the only one of his wives who could assist him by her knowledge and advice; the others were all like children, ignorant, and caring for nothing but dress and finery: living only for petty intrigues and useless trifles. This Egyptian girl would be obliged to love him, for he would be her protector, her lord, her father and brother in this foreign land.

"She must," he said to himself, and to this despot to wish for a thing and to possess it seemed one and the same. "Bartja had better take care," he murmured, "or he shall know what fate awaits the man who dares to cross my path."

Nitetis too had passed a restless night.

The common apartment of the women was next to her own, and the noise and singing there had not ceased until nearly midnight. She could often distinguish the shrill voice of Boges joking and laughing with these women, who were under his charge. At last all was quiet in the wide palace halls and then her thoughts turned to her distant home and her poor sister Tachot, longing for her and for the beautiful Bartja, who, Crœsus had told her, was going to-morrow to the war and possibly to death. At last she fell asleep, overcome by the

fatigue of the journey and dreaming of her future husband. She saw him on his black charger. The foaming animal shied at Bartja who was lying in the road, threw his rider and dragged him into the Nile, whose waves became blood-red. In her terror she screamed for help; her cries were echoed back from the Pyramids in such loud and fearful tones that she awoke.

But hark! what could that be? That wailing, shrill cry which she had heard in her dream,—she could hear it still.

Hastily drawing aside the shutters from one of the openings which served as windows, she looked out. A large and beautiful garden, laid out with fountains and shady avenues, lay before her, glittering with the early dew.[244] No sound was to be heard except the one which had alarmed her, and this too died away at last on the morning breeze. After a few minutes she heard cries and noise in the distance, then the great city awaking to its daily work, which soon settled down into a deep, dull murmur like the roaring of the sea.

Nitetis was by this time so thoroughly awakened from the effect of the fresh morning air, that she did not care to lie down again. She went once more to the window and perceived two figures coming out of the

244. The Persian gardens were celebrated throughout the old world, and seem to have been laid out much less stiffly than the Egyptian. Even the kings of Persia did not consider horticulture beneath their notice, and the highest among the Achæmenidæ took an especial pleasure in laying out parks, called in Persian Paradises. Herodotus V. 14. 49–52. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 6. 9. *Œcon.* 4. Diodor. XVI. 41. Plutarch, *Alcibiades* 24. Their admiration for well-grown trees went so far, that Xerxes, finding on his way to Greece a singularly beautiful tree, hung ornaments of gold upon its branches. Firdusi, the great Persian epic poet, compares human beauty to the growth of the cypress, as the highest praise he can give. Indeed some trees were worshipped by the Persians; and as the tree of life in the Hebrew and Egyptian, so we find sacred trees in their Paradise.

house. One she recognized as the eunuch Boges; he was talking to a beautiful Persian woman carelessly dressed. They approached her window. Nitetis hid herself behind the half-opened shutter and listened, for she fancied she heard her own name.

"The Egyptian is still asleep." said Boges. "She must be much fatigued by the journey. I see too that one of her windows is still firmly closed."

"Then tell me quickly," said the Persian. "Do you really think that this stranger's coming can injure me in any way?"

"Certainly, I do, my pretty one."

"But what leads you to suppose this?"

"She is only to obey the king's commands, not mine."

"Is that all?"

"No, my treasure. I know the king. I can read his features as the Magi read the sacred books."

"Then we must ruin her."

"More easily said than done, my little bird."

"Leave me alone! you are insolent."

"Well, but nobody can see us, and you know you can do nothing without my help."

"Very well then, I don't care. But tell me quickly what we can do."

"Thanks, my sweet Phædime. Well, for the present we must be patient and wait our time. That detestable hypocrite Crœsus seems to have established himself as protector of the Egyptian; when he is away, we must set our snares."

The speakers were by this time at such a distance, that Nitetis could not understand what they said. In silent indignation she closed the shutter, and called her

maidens to dress her. She knew her enemies now—she knew that a thousand dangers surrounded her, and yet she felt proud and happy, for was she not chosen to be the real wife of Cambyses? Her own worth seemed clearer to her than ever before, from a comparison with these miserable creatures, and a wonderful certainty of ultimate victory stole into her heart, for Nitetis was a firm believer in the magic power of virtue.

"What was that dreadful sound I heard so early?" she asked of her principal waiting-woman, who was arranging her hair.

"Do you mean the sounding brass, lady?"

"Scarcely two hours ago I was awakened by a strange and frightful sound."

"That was the sounding brass, lady. It is used to awaken the young sons of the Persian nobles, who are brought up at the gate of the king.[245] You will soon become accustomed to it. We have long ceased even to hear it, and indeed on great festivals, when it is not sounded, we awake from the unaccustomed stillness. From the hanging-gardens you will be able to see how the boys are taken to bathe every morning, whatever the weather may be. The poor little ones are taken from their mothers when they are six years old, to be brought up with the other boys of their own rank under the king's eye."

"Are they to begin learning the luxurious manners of the court so early?"

"Oh no! the poor boys lead a terrible life. They are obliged to sleep on the hard ground, to rise before the sun. Their food is bread and water, with very

245. From Xenophon, *Cyrop.* VIII. 8. 7. *Anabasis* I. 9.

little meat, and they are never allowed to taste wine or vegetables. Indeed at times they are deprived of food and drink for some days, simply to accustom them to privations. When the court is at Ecbatana or Pasargadæ,[246] and the weather is bitterly cold, they are sure to be taken out to bathe, and here in Susa, the hotter the sun, the longer and more difficult the marches they are compelled to take."

"And these boys, so simply and severely brought up, become in after life such luxurious men?"

"Yes, that is always the case. A meal that has been waited for is all the more relished when it comes. These boys see splendor and magnificence around them daily; they know how rich they are in reality, and yet have to suffer from hunger and privation. Who can wonder, if, when at last they gain their liberty, they plunge into the pleasures of life with a tenfold eagerness? But on the other hand, in time of war, or when going to the chase, they never murmur at hunger or thirst, spring with a laugh into the mud regardless of their thin boots and purple trousers, and sleep as soundly on a rock as on their beds of delicate Arabian wool. You must see the feats these boys perform, especially when the king is watching them! Cambyses will certainly take you if you ask him."

"I know those exercises already. In Egypt the girls as well as the boys are kept to such gymnastic exercises. My limbs were trained to flexibility by running, postures, and games with hoops and balls."*

246. The summer residences of the kings of Persia, where it is sometimes very cold. Ecbatana lies at the foot of the high Elburs (Orontes) range of mountains in the neighborhood of the modern Hamadân; Pasargadæ not far from Rachmet in the highlands of Iran.

* See note 153.

"How strange! Here, we women grow up just as we please, and are taught nothing but a little spinning and weaving. Is it true that most of the Egyptian women can read and write?"

"Yes, nearly all."

"By Mithras, you must be a clever people! Scarcely any of the Persians, except the Magi and the scribes, learn these difficult arts. The sons of the nobles are taught to speak the truth, to be courageous, obedient, and to reverence the gods; to hunt, ride, plant trees and discern between herbs; but whoever, like the noble Darius, wishes to learn the art of writing, must apply to the Magi. Women are forbidden to turn their minds to such studies.—Now your dress is complete. This string of pearls, which the king sent this morning, looks magnificent in your raven-black hair, but it is easy to see that you are not accustomed to the full silk trousers and high-heeled boots. If, however, you walk two or three times up and down the room you will surpass all the Persian ladies even in your walk!"

At this moment a knock was heard and Boges entered. He had come to conduct Nitetis to Kassandane's apartments, where Cambyses was waiting for her.

The eunuch affected an abject humility, and poured forth a stream of flattering words, in which he likened the princess to the sun, the starry heavens, a pure fount of happiness, and a garden of roses. Nitetis deigned him not a word in reply, but followed, with a beating heart, to the queen's apartment.

In order to keep out the noonday sun and produce a salutary half-light for the blind queen's eyes, her windows were shaded by curtains of green Indian silk. The floor was covered with a thick Babylonian carpet,

soft as moss under the foot. The walls were faced with a mosaic of ivory, tortoise-shell, gold, silver, malachite, lapis-lazuli,* ebony and amber. The seats and couches were of gold covered with lions' skins, and a table of silver stood by the side of the blind queen. Kassandane was seated in a costly arm-chair. She wore a robe of violet-blue, embroidered with silver, and over her snow-white hair lay a long veil of delicate lace, woven in Egypt, the ends of which were wound round her neck and tied in a large bow beneath her chin.[247] She was between sixty and seventy years old; her face, framed, as it were, into a picture by the lace veil, was exquisitely symmetrical in its form, intellectual, kind and benevolent in its expression.

The blind eyes were closed, but those who gazed on her felt that, if open, they would shine with the gentle light of stars. Even when sitting, her attitude and height showed a tall and stately figure. Indeed her entire appearance was worthy the widow of the great and good Cyrus.

On a low seat at her feet, drawing long threads from a golden spindle, sat the queen's youngest child Atossa, born to her late in life. Cambyses was standing before her, and behind, hardly visible in the dim light, Nebenchari, the Egyptian oculist.

247. This description of the magnificence of the queen-mother's apartment is in no way exaggerated. The details are taken from Æschylus' *Persians*, Xenophon's *Cyropædia* and *Anabasis*, Arrian, Curtius, Strabo and others. I have called the lace worn by Kassandane "Egyptian," because at that time the finest known lace was woven on the Nile, and classic writers maintain that the proof of this lies in the many transparent robes, which are to be seen in the paintings on Egyptian monuments. Sir Gardner Wilkinson possesses a piece of remarkably fine old Egyptian weaving.

* Lapis-lazuli and malachite were known at a very early date among the tributes paid to the Pharaohs by Asiatic nations.

As Nitetis entered, Cambyses came towards her and led her to his mother. The daughter of Amasis fell on her knees before this venerable woman, and kissed her hand with real affection.

"Be welcome here!" exclaimed the blind queen, feeling her way to the young girl's head, on which she laid her hand, "I have heard much in your praise, and hope to gain in you a dear and loving daughter."

Nitetis kissed the gentle, delicate hand again, saying in a low voice: "O how I thank you for these words! Will you, the wife of the great Cyrus, permit me to call you mother? My tongue has been so long accustomed to this sweet word; and now after long weeks of silence, I tremble with joy at the thought that I may say 'my mother' once more! I will indeed try to deserve your love and kindness; and you—you will be to me all that your loving countenance seems to promise? Advise and teach me; let me find a refuge at your feet, if sometimes the longing for home becomes too strong, and my poor heart too weak to bear its grief or joy alone. Oh, be my mother! that one word includes all else!"

The blind queen felt the warm tears fall on her hand; she pressed her lips kindly on the weeping girl's forehead, and answered: "I can understand your feelings. My apartments shall be always open to you, my heart ready to welcome you here. Come when you will, and call me your mother with the same perfect confidence with which I, from my whole heart, name you my daughter. In a few months you will be my son's wife, and then the gods may grant you that gift, which, by implanting within you the feelings of a mother, will prevent you from feeling the need of one."

"May Ormuszd hear and give his blessing!" said

Cambyses. "I rejoice, mother, that my wife pleases you, and I know that when once she becomes familiar with our manners and customs she will be happy here. If Nitetis pay due heed, our marriage can be celebrated in four months."

"But the law———" began his mother.

"I command—in four months, and should like to see him who dare raise an objection. Farewell! Nebenchari, use your best skill for the queen's eyes, and if my wife permit, you, as her countryman, may visit her to-morrow. Farewell! Bartja sends his parting greetings. He is on the road to the Tapuri."

Atossa wiped away a tear in silence, but Kassandane answered: "You would have done well to allow the boy to remain here a few months longer. Your commander, Megabyzus, could have subdued that small nation alone."

"Of that I have no doubt," replied the king, "but Bartja desired an opportunity of distinguishing himself in the field; and for that reason I sent him."

"Would he not gladly have waited until the war with the Massagetæ, where more glory might be gained?" asked the blind woman.

"Yes," said Atossa, "and if he should fall in this war, you will have deprived him of the power of fulfilling his most sacred duty, of avenging the soul of our father!"

"Be silent!" cried Cambyses in an overbearing tone, "or I shall have to teach you what is becoming in women and children. Bartja is on far too good terms with fortune to fall in the war. He will live, I hope, to deserve the love which is now so freely flung into his lap like an alms."

"How canst thou speak thus?" cried Kassandane. "In what manly virtue is Bartja wanting? Is it his fault, that he has had no such opportunity of distinguishing himself in the field as thou hast had? You are the king and I am bound to respect your commands, but I blame my son for depriving his blind mother of the greatest joy left to her in her old age. Bartja would have gladly remained here until the Massagetan war, if your self-will had not determined otherwise."

"And what I will is good!" exclaimed Cambyses interrupting his mother, and pale with anger, "I desire that this subject be not mentioned again."

So saying, he left the room abruptly and went into the reception-hall, followed by the immense retinue which never quitted him, whithersoever he might direct his steps.

An hour passed, and still Nitetis and the lovely Atossa were sitting side by side, at the feet of the queen.

The Persian women listened eagerly to all their new friend could tell them about Egypt and its wonders.

"Oh! how I should like to visit your home!" exclaimed Atossa. "It must be quite, quite different from Persia and everything else that I have seen yet. The fruitful shores of your great river, larger even than the Euphrates, the temples with their painted columns, those huge artificial mountains, the Pyramids, where the ancient kings lie buried—it must all be wonderfully beautiful. But what pleases me best of all is your description of the entertainments, where men and women converse together as they like. The only meals we are allowed to take in the society of men are on New Year's Day and the king's birthday, and then we are forbidden to speak; indeed it is not thought right for us even to

raise our eyes. How different it is with you! By Mithras! mother, I should like to be an Egyptian, for we poor creatures are in reality nothing but miserable slaves; and yet I feel that the great Cyrus was my father too, and that I am worth quite as much as most men. Do I not speak the truth? can I not obey as well as command? have I not the same thirst and longing for glory? could not I learn to ride, to string a bow, to fight and swim, if I were taught and inured to such exercises?"

The girl had sprung from her seat while speaking, her eyes flashed and she swung her spindle in the air, quite unconscious that in so doing she was breaking the thread and entangling the flax.

"Remember what is fitting," reminded Kassandane. "A woman must submit with humility to her quiet destiny, and not aspire to imitate the deeds of men."

"But there are women who lead the same lives as men," cried Atossa. "There are the Amazons who live on the shores of the Thermodon in Themiscyra, and at Comana on the Iris; they have waged great wars, and even to this day wear men's armor."

"Who told you this?"

"My old nurse, Stephanion, whom my father brought a captive from Sinope to Pasargadæ."

"But I can teach you better," said Nitetis. "It is true that in Themiscyra and Comana there are a number of women who wear soldier's armor; but they are only priestesses, and clothe themselves like the warlike goddess they serve, in order to present to the worshippers a manifestation of the divinity in human form. Crœsus says that an army of Amazons has never existed, but that the Greeks, (always ready and able to turn

anything into a beautiful myth), having seen these priestesses, at once transformed the armed virgins dedicated to the goddess into a nation of fighting women."[248]

"Then they are liars!" exclaimed the disappointed girl.

"It is true, that the Greeks have not the same reverence for truth as you have," answered Nitetis, "but they do not call the men who invent these beautiful stories liars; they are called poets."

"Just as it is with ourselves," said Kassandane. "The poets, who sing the praises of my husband, have altered and adorned his early life in a marvellous manner; yet no one calls them liars. But tell me, my daughter, is it true that these Greeks are more beautiful than other men, and understand art better even than the Egyptians?"

"On that subject I should not venture to pronounce a judgment. There is such a great difference between the Greek and Egyptian works of art. When I went into our own gigantic temples to pray, I always felt as if I must prostrate myself in the dust before the greatness of the gods, and entreat them not to crush so insignificant a worm; but in the temple of Hera at Samos, I could only raise my hands to heaven in joyful thanksgiving, that the gods had made the earth so beautiful. In Egypt I always believed as I had been taught: 'Life is a sleep; we shall not awake to our true existence in the kingdom of Osiris till the hour of death;'

248. Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums* p. 231–238. It has been proved that the Amazons belong to the regions of fable. Strange to say the Chinese have a similar myth. In the ethnographical Museum at Jena, of which I am director, there is an interesting Chinese picture of an Amazon war.

but in Greece I thought: 'I am born to live and to enjoy this cheerful, bright and blooming world.'"

"Ah! tell us something more about Greece," cried Atossa; "but first Nebenchari must put a fresh bandage on my mother's eyes."

The oculist, a tall, grave man in the white robes of an Egyptian priest, came forward to perform the necessary operation, and after being kindly greeted by Nitetis, withdrew once more silently into the background. At the same time a eunuch entered to enquire whether Crœsus might be allowed to pay his respectful homage to the king's mother.

The aged king soon appeared, and was welcomed as the old and tried friend of the Persian royal family. Atossa, with her usual impetuosity, fell on the neck of the friend she had so sorely missed during his absence; the queen gave him her hand, and Nitetis met him like a loving daughter.

"I thank the gods, that I am permitted to see you again," said Crœsus. "The young can look at life as a possession, as a thing understood and sure, but at my age every year must be accepted as an undeserved gift from the gods, for which a man must be thankful."

"I could envy you for this happy view of life," sighed Kassandane. "My years are fewer than yours, and yet every new day seems to me a punishment sent by the Immortals."

"Can I be listening to the wife of the great Cyrus?" asked Crœsus. "How long is it since courage and confidence left that brave heart? I tell you, you will recover sight, and once more thank the gods for a good old age. The man who recovers, after a serious illness, values health a hundred-fold more than before; and he who

regains sight after blindness, must be an especial favorite of the gods. Imagine to yourself the delight of that first moment when your eyes behold once more the bright shining of the sun, the faces of your loved ones, the beauty of all created things, and tell me, would not that outweigh even a whole life of blindness and dark night?[249] In the day of healing, even if that come in old age, a new life will begin and I shall hear you confess that my friend Solon was right."

"In what respect?" asked Atossa.

"In wishing that Mimnermos, the Colophonian[250] poet, would correct the poem in which he has assigned sixty years as the limit of a happy life, and would change the sixty into eighty."

"Oh no!" exclaimed Kassandane. "Even were Mithras to restore my sight, such a long life would be dreadful. Without my husband I seem to myself like a wanderer in the desert, aimless and without a guide."

"Are your children then nothing to you, and this kingdom, of which you have watched the rise and growth?"

"No indeed! but my children need me no longer, and the ruler of this kingdom is too proud to listen to a woman's advice."

On hearing these words Atossa and Nitetis seized each one of the queen's hands, and Nitetis cried: "You ought to desire a long life for our sakes. What should we be without your help and protection?"

249. These words cannot surely be called an anachronism. The same feelings are expressed in the beautiful passage of Aristotle in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*.

250. Mimnermos. *Frag. ed.* Bergk. 6. Solon. Frag. same. 20.

Kassandane smiled again, murmuring in a scarcely audible voice: "You are right, my children, you will stand in need of your mother."

"Now you are speaking once more like the wife of the great Cyrus," cried Crœsus, kissing the robe of the blind woman. "Your presence will indeed be needed, who can say how soon? Cambyses is like hard steel; sparks fly wherever he strikes. You can hinder these sparks from kindling a destroying fire among your loved ones, and this should be your duty. You alone can dare to admonish the king in the violence of his passion. He regards you as his equal, and, while despising the opinion of others, feels wounded by his mother's disapproval. Is it not then your duty to abide patiently as mediator between the king, the kingdom and your loved ones, and so, by your own timely reproofs, to humble the pride of your son, that he may be spared that deeper humiliation which, if not thus averted, the gods will surely inflict."

"You are right," answered the blind woman, "but I feel only too well that my influence over him is but small. He has been so much accustomed to have his own will, that he will follow no advice, even if it come from his mother's lips."

"But he must at least *hear* it," answered Crœsus, "and that is much, for even if he refuse to obey, your counsels will, like divine voices, continue to make themselves heard within him, and will keep him back from many a sinful act. I will remain your ally in this matter; for, as Cambyses' dying father appointed me the counsellor of his son in word and deed, I venture occasionally a bold word to arrest his excesses. Ours is the only blame from which he shrinks: we alone

can dare to speak our opinion to him. Let us courageously do our duty in this our office: you, moved by love to Persia and your son, and I by thankfulness to that great man to whom I owe life and freedom, and whose son Cambyses is. I know that you bemoan the manner in which he has been brought up; but such late repentance must be avoided like poison. For the errors of the wise the remedy is reparation, not regret; regret consumes the heart, but the effort to repair an error causes it to throb with a noble pride."

"In Egypt," said Nitetis, "regret is numbered among the forty-two deadly sins. One of our principal commandments is, 'Thou shalt not consume thine heart.'"[251]

"There you remind me," said Crœsus "that I have undertaken to arrange for your instruction in the Persian customs, religion and language. I had intended to withdraw to Barene, the town which I received as a gift from Cyrus, and there, in that most lovely mountain valley, to take my rest; but for your sake and for the king's, I will remain here and continue to give you instruction in the Persian tongue. Kassandane herself will initiate you in the customs peculiar to women at

251. In the Ritual of the Dead (indeed in almost every Papyrus of the Dead) we meet with a representation of the soul, whose heart is being weighed and judged. The speech made by the soul is called the negative justification, in which she assures the 42 judges of the dead, that she has not committed the 42 deadly sins which she enumerates. This justification is doubly interesting because it contains nearly the entire moral law of Moses, which last, apart from all national peculiarities and habits of mind, seems to contain the quintessence of human morality—and this we find ready paragraphed in our negative justification. *Todtenbuch ed.* Lepsius. 125. We cannot discuss this question philosophically here, but the law of Pythagoras, who borrowed so much from Egypt, and the contents of which are the same, speaks for our view. It is similar in form to the Egyptian.

the Persian court, and Oropastes, the high-priest, has been ordered by the king to make you acquainted with the religion of Iran. He will be your spiritual, and I your secular guardian."[252]

At these words Nitetis, who had been smiling happily, cast down her eyes and asked in a low voice: "Am I to become unfaithful to the gods of my fathers, who have never failed to hear my prayers? Can I, ought I to forget them?"

"Yes," said Kassandane decidedly, "thou canst, and it is thy bounden duty, for a wife ought to have no friends but those her husband calls such. The gods are a man's earliest, mightiest and most faithful friends, and it therefore becomes thy duty, as a wife, to honor them, and to close thine heart against strange gods and superstitions, as thou wouldst close it against strange lovers."

"And," added Crœsus, "we will not rob you of your deities; we will only give them to you under other names. As Truth remains eternally the same, whether called 'maa', as by the Egyptians, or 'Aletheia' as by the Greeks, so the essence of the Deity continues unchanged in all places and times. Listen, my daughter: I myself, while still king of Lydia, often sacrificed in sincere devotion to the Apollo of the Greeks, without a fear that in so doing I should offend the Lydian sun-god Sandon; the Ionians pay their worship to the Asiatic Cybele, and, now that I have become a Persian, I raise my hands adoringly to

252. When a Persian child begins to wear the girdle "*Kosti*" he or she must choose a guardian from among the Yazatas, and an adviser in spiritual things from among the Destûrs or priests. This adviser is the spiritual father of the child. Spiegel, *Avesta* II. *Einleitung* XXII.

Mithras, Ormuzd and the lovely Anahita.[253] Pythagoras too, whose teaching is not new to you, worships one god only, whom he calls Apollo; because, like the Greek sun-god, he is the source of light and of those harmonies which Pythagoras holds to be higher than all else. And lastly, Xenophanes of Colophon[254] laughs at the many and divers gods of Homer and sets one single deity on high—the ceaselessly creative might of nature, whose essence consists of thought, reason and eternity. In this power everything has its rise, and it alone remains unchanged, while all created matter must be continually renewed and perfected. The ardent longing for some being above us, on whom we can lean when our own powers fail,—the wonderful instinct which desires a faithful friend to whom we can tell every joy and sorrow without fear of disclosure,—the thankfulness with which we behold this beautiful world and all the rich blessings we have received—these are the feelings which we call piety—devotion.

253. Anahita or *Ardî-çûra* was the goddess of the water-springs and has been, not incorrectly, compared with the Greek Aphrodite. All waters flowed from the spring Anahita, and it possessed unlimited powers of cleansing. *Vendidad* VII. 37–40. The supposition of our Dutch translator, that Anahita was originally a Semitic goddess who later became merged into the Persian female genius of the waters, has much in its favor; we have expressed the same opinion ourselves elsewhere. It can be proved that she was not worshipped till the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon. Stickel, the celebrated promoter of the study of Oriental coins, is the most eager defender of the former view: *De Dianæ Pers. monum. Gr.;* and Windischmann of the latter: *Die persische Anahita.* In the later tradition, it is said that Zoroaster entrusted her with the seed from which his son was to spring up at the last judgment. Anquetil, *Zend-Avesta* II. p. 43.

254. A celebrated freethinker, who indulged in bold and independent speculations, and suffered much persecution for his ridicule of the Homeric deities. He flourished at the time of our history and lived to a great age, far on into the fifth century. We have quoted some fragments of his writings above. He committed his speculations also to verse.

These you must hold fast; remembering, however, at the same time, that the world is ruled neither by the Egyptian, the Persian, nor the Greek divinities apart from each other, but that all these are one; and that one indivisible Deity, how different soever may be the names and characters under which He is represented, guides the fate of men and nations."[255]

The two Persian women listened to the old man in amazement. Their unpractised powers were unable to follow the course of his thoughts. Nitetis, however, had understood him thoroughly, and answered: "My mother Ladice was the pupil of Pythagoras, and has told me something like this already; but the Egyptian priests consider such views to be sacrilegious, and call their originators despisers of the gods. So I tried to repress such thoughts; but now I will resist them no longer. What the good and wise Crœsus believes cannot possibly be evil or impious! Let Oropastes come! I am ready to listen to his teaching. The god of Thebes, our Ammon, shall be transformed into Ormuzd,—Isis or Hathor, into Anahita, and those among our gods for whom I can find no likeness in the Persian religion, I shall designate by the name of 'the Deity.'"

Crœsus smiled. He had fancied, knowing how obstinately the Egyptians clung to all they had received from tradition and education, that it would have been more difficult for Nitetis to give up the gods of her native land. He had forgotten that her mother was a Greek, and that the daughters of Amasis had studied the doctrines of Pythagoras. Neither was he aware

255. Whoever is acquainted with the aphorisms of Xenophanes, will not find an anachronism in this speech.

how ardently Nitetis longed to please her proud lord and master. Even Amasis, who so revered the Samian philosopher, who had so often yielded to Hellenic influence, and who with good reason might be called a freethinking Egyptian, would sooner have exchanged life for death, than his multiform gods for the one idea "Deity."

"You are a teachable pupil," said Crœsus, laying his hand on her head, "and as a reward, you shall be allowed either to visit Kassandane, or to receive Atossa in the hanging-gardens, every morning, and every afternoon until sunset."

This joyful news was received with loud rejoicings by Atossa, and with a grateful smile by the Egyptian girl.

"And lastly," said Crœsus, "I have brought some balls and hoops with me from Sais, that you may be able to amuse yourselves in Egyptian fashion."

"Balls?" asked Atossa in amazement; "what can we do with the heavy wooden things?"[256]

"That need not trouble you," answered Crœsus, laughing. "The balls I speak of are pretty little things made of the skins of fish filled with air, or of leather. A child of two years old can throw these, but you would find it no easy matter even to lift one of those wooden balls with which the Persian boys play. Are you content with me, Nitetis?"

"How can I thank you enough, my father?"

"And now listen to my plan for the division of your

256. In Persia games with balls are still reckoned among the amusements of the men. One player drives a wooden ball to the other, as in the English game of cricket. Chardin (*Voyage en Perse.* III. p. 226.) saw the game played by 300 players. There is much on this subject in Hyde. *De ludis orientalium.*

time. In the morning you will visit Kassandane, chat with Atossa, and listen to the teaching of your noble mother."

Here the blind woman bent her head in approval.

"Towards noon I shall come to teach you, and we can talk sometimes about Egypt and your loved ones there, but always in Persian. You would like this, would you not?"

Nitetis smiled.

"Every seeond day, Oropastes will be in attendance to initiate you in the Persian religion."

"I will take the greatest pains to comprehend him quickly."

"In the afternoon you can be with Atossa as long as you like. Does that please you too?"

"O Crœsus!" cried the young girl and kissed the old man's hand.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE next day Nitetis removed to the country-house in the hanging-gardens, and began a monotonous, but happy and industrious life there, according to the rules laid down by Crœsus. Every day she was carried to Kassandane and Atossa in a closely shut-up litter.

Nitetis soon began to look upon the blind queen as a beloved and loving mother, and the merry, spirited Atossa nearly made up to her for the loss of her sister Tachot, so far away on the distant Nile. She could not have desired a better companion than this gay, cheerful girl, whose wit and merriment effectually pre-

vented homesickness or discontent from settling in her friend's heart. The gravity and earnestness of Nitetis' character were brightened by Atossa's gaiety, and Atossa's exuberant spirits calmed and regulated by the thoughtful nature of Nitetis.

Both Crœsus and Kassandane were pleased and satisfied with their new daughter and pupil, and Oropastes extolled her talents and industry daily to Cambyses. She learnt the Persian language unusually well and quickly; Cambyses only visited his mother when he hoped to find Nitetis there, and presented her continually with rich dresses and costly jewels. But the highest proof of his favor consisted in his abstaining from visiting her at her house in the hanging-gardens, a line of conduct which proved that he meant to include Nitetis in the small number of his real and lawful wives, a privilege of which many a princess in his harem could not boast.

The grave, beautiful girl threw a strange spell over this strong, turbulent man. Her presence alone seemed enough to soften his stubborn will, and he would watch their games for hours, his eyes fixed on her graceful movements. Once, when the ball had fallen into the water, the king sprang in after it, regardless of his costly apparel. Nitetis screamed on seeing his intention, but Cambyses handed her the dripping toy with the words: "Take care or I shall be obliged to frighten you again." At the same time he drew from his neck a gold chain set with jewels and gave it to the blushing girl, who thanked him with a look which fully revealed her feelings for her future husband.

Crœsus, Kassandane and Atossa soon noticed that Nitetis loved the king. Her former fear of this proud

and powerful being had indeed changed into a passionate admiration. She felt as if she must die if deprived of his presence. He seemed to her like a glorious and omnipotent divinity, and her wish to possess him presumptuous and sacrilegious; but its fulfilment shone before her as an idea more beautiful even than return to her native land and reunion with those who, till now, had been her only loved ones.

Nitetis herself was hardly conscious of the strength of her feelings, and believed that when she trembled before the king's arrival it was from fear, and not from her longing to behold him once more. Crœsus, however, had soon discovered the truth, and brought a deep blush to his favorite's cheek by singing to her, old as he was, Anacreon's newest song, which he had learnt at Sais from Ibykus:

"We read the flying courser's name
Upon his side in marks of flame;
And by their turban'd brows alone
The warriors of the East are known.
But in the lover's glowing eyes,
The inlet to his bosom lies;
Through them we see the tiny mark,
Where Love has dropp'd his burning spark!" *

And thus, in work and amusement, jest, earnest, and mutual love, the weeks and months passed with Nitetis. Cambyses' command that she was to be happy in his land had fulfilled itself, and by the time the Mesopotamian spring-tide (January, February and March), which succeeds the rainy month of December, was over, and the principal festival of the Asiatics, the New Year, had been solemnized at the equinox, and the May sun had

* Pægnion 15.

begun to glow in the heavens, Nitetis felt quite at home in Babylon, and all the Persians knew that the young Egyptian princess had quite displaced Phædime, the daughter of Otanes, in the king's favor, and would certainly become his first and favorite wife.

Boges sank considerably in public estimation, for it was known that Cambyses had ceased to visit the harem, and the chief of the eunuchs had owed all his importance to the women, who were compelled to coax from Cambyses whatever Boges desired for himself or others. Not a day passed on which the mortified official did not consult with the supplanted favorite Phædime, as to the best means of ruining Nitetis, but their most finely spun intrigues and artifices were baffled by the strength of the king's love and the blameless life of his royal bride.

Phædime, impatient, mortified, and thirsting for vengeance, was perpetually urging Boges to some decided act; he, on the contrary, advised patience.

At last, however, after many weeks, he came to her full of joy, exclaiming: "I have devised a little plan which must ruin the Egyptian woman as surely as my name is Boges. When Bartja comes back, my treasure, our hour will have arrived."

While saying this the creature rubbed his fat, soft hands, and, with his perpetual fulsome smile, looked as if he were feasting on some good deed performed. He did not, however, give Phædime the faintest idea of the nature of his "little plan," and only answered her pressing questions with the words: "Better lay your head in a lion's jaws, than your secret in the ears of a woman. I fully acknowledge your courage, but at the same time advise you to remember that, though a man proves his

courage in action, a woman's is shown in obedience. Obey my words and await the issue in patience."

Nebenchari, the oculist, continued to attend the queen, but so carefully abstained from all intercourse with the Persians, that he became a proverb among them for his gloomy, silent ways. During the day he was to be found in the queen's apartments, silently examining large rolls of papyri, which he called the book of Athotes and the sacred Ambres;[257] at night, by permission of the king and the satrap[258] of Babylon, he often ascended one of the high towers on the walls, called Tritantæchmes, in order to observe the stars.

The Chaldæan priests, the earliest astronomers, would have allowed him to take his observations from

257. The name "the holy Ambres" seems to have been corrupted from the first words of the Ritual of the Dead. Horapollo (I. 58. ed. Leemans) mentions the "Book of diseases," and Manetho, in Africanus and Eusebius, tells that Athotes, whom all the chronographs and monuments agree in calling the successor of Menes, the first king of Egypt, had written books on anatomy. But all the scientific and especially medical books were usually ascribed to the god Thoth, and it may easily have arisen, that from the likeness between these two names, the king gained the credit which was really due to the god. There are said to have been six medical books among the Egyptian sacred writings. Clem. Alex. *Strom. ed* Potter p. 757. (VI. 4.) Iamblichus *de Myst. Aeg.* VIII. 4. See also Vol. II. note 49.

258. Satraps were the governors of single provinces, and ruled with pretty nearly absolute authority as representatives of the king. Malcolm (*Persia* I. 41.) was the first to propose an explanation of the name, suggesting that it may have been taken from the words *Chattra* a parasol and *pati* lord—the lord of the parasol; but we are glad to give this up in favor of a later one by Tielesch, who derives the word satrap from *Khshatra* a government and *pavan* protector. It is true that on the monuments we see the great men of the kingdom performing the office of parasol-bearers behind the king with great dignity, (Niebuhr, Texier, Layard, etc.), but in Bactrian and in the Zend-Avesta they are called *Shôitrapaita*, "lord of a province," and *Shôitrapan*, "protector of a province." The Dutch translator of this note, Dr. Rogge, takes the latter view. We will only remark that in old Persian, as well as in German, the idea of covering and sheltering, as with a parasol, is conveyed in the word used for the act of protecting or defending. In an Egyptian manuscript, General Ptolemæus (Lagi) is called Chschatrapan, (satrap.)

the summit of the great temple of Bel, their own observatory, but he refused this offer decidedly, and persisted in his haughty reserve. When Oropastes attempted to explain to him the celebrated Babylonian sun-dial, introduced by Anaximander of Miletus into Greece, he turned from the Magian with a scornful laugh, saying: "We knew all this, before you knew the meaning of an hour."[259]

Nitetis had shown Nebenchari much kindness, yet he took no interest in her, seemed indeed to avoid her purposely, and on her asking whether she had displeased or offended him, answered: "For me you are a stranger. How can I reckon those my friends, who can so gladly and so quickly forget those they loved best, their gods, and the customs of their native land?"

Boges quickly discovered this state of feeling on the part of Nebenchari, and took much pains to secure him as an ally, but the physician rejected the eunuch's flatteries, gifts, and attentions with dignity.

No sooner did an Angare appear in the court of the palace with despatches for the king, than Boges hastened to enquire whether news from the Tapuri had arrived.

At length the desired messenger appeared, bringing word that the rebels were subdued, and Bartja on the point of returning.

Three weeks passed—fresh messengers arrived from day to day announcing the approach of the victorious

259. Though the Chaldæans, as Aristotle was told, possessed astronomical calculations reaching as far back as the year 1903 before Alexander,—2234 B. C.—(*Simplicius comm.* in Arist. *de cœlo* I. II. Lepsius, *Chronologie*, 8. 9.) yet there is no doubt that the Egyptian astronomy was still older. Diodorus indeed (I. 81.) tells us the Egyptian priests maintained, that the Chaldæans were Egyptian colonists and owed their fame as astronomers to the teaching of the Egyptian

prince; the streets glittered once more in festal array, the army entered the gates of Babylon, Bartja thanked the rejoicing multitude, and a short time after was in the arms of his blind mother.

Cambyses received his brother with undisguised warmth, and took him to the queen's apartments, when he knew that Nitetis would be there.

For he was sure the Egyptian girl loved him; his previous jealousy seemed a silly fancy now, and he wished to give Bartja an opportunity of seeing how entirely he trusted his bride.

Cambyses' love had made him mild and gentle, unwearied in giving and in doing good. His wrath slumbered for a season, and around the spot where the heads of those who had suffered capital punishment were exhibited as a warning to their fellow-men, the hungry, screeching crows now wheeled, in vain.

The influence of the insinuating eunuchs (a race who had never been seen within the gates of Cyrus until the incorporation of Media, Lydia and Babylon, in which countries they had filled many of the highest offices at court and in the state), was now waning, and the importance of the noble Achæmenidæ increasing in proportion; for Cambyses applied oftener to the latter than to the former for advice in matters relating to the welfare of the country.

The aged Hystaspes, father of Darius, governor of Persia proper and cousin to the king; Pharnaspes, Cambyses' grandfather on the mother's side; Otanes, his uncle and father-in-law; Intaphernes, Aspathines,

priests. There may be some truth in the latter assertion, but it is more likely that the Egyptians came from Western Asia, than that the Chaldæans came from Egypt.

Gobryas, Hydarnes, the general Megabyzus,[260] father of Zopyrus, the envoy Prexaspes, the noble Crœsus, and the old warrior Araspes; in short, the flower of the ancient Persian aristocracy, were now at the court of Cambyses.

To this must be added that the entire nobility of the realm, the satraps or governors of the provinces, and the chief priests from every town were also assembled at Babylon to celebrate the king's birthday.[261]

The entire body of officials and deputies streamed from the provinces up to the royal city, bringing presents to their ruler and good wishes; they came also to take part in the great sacrifices at which horses, stags, bulls and asses were slaughtered in thousands as offerings to the gods.

At this festival all the Persians received gifts, every man was allowed to ask a petition of the king, which seldom remained unfulfilled, and in every city the people were feasted at the royal expense. Cambyses had commanded that his marriage with Nitetis should be celebrated eight days after the birthday, and all the

260. These names, given by Herodotus, are to be found, with slight differences of form, in the inscription of Behistûn or Bisitun. Spiegel, *Altpersische Keilschriften.* Behistûn inscription IV. XVIII. p. 37. Rawlinson, *Journ. of Asiatic Soc.* X. p. 12.

261. The king's birthday was the principal feast among the Persians, and called "the perfect feast." Herod. I. 133. Birthdays were held in much honor by the ancients, and more especially those of their kings. Both the great bilingual Egyptian tablets, which we possess (the Rosetta stone, line 10 of hieroglyphic text; Gr. text, line 46. and the edict of Canopus ed. Lepsius, hieroglyphic text l. 3. Gr. text l. 5.) mention the celebration of the birthday of one of the Ptolemies; and even of Rameses II., so early as the 14th century B. C. we read: *nehem em pet heru em mese-t-f*, "There was joy in heaven on his birthday." Stela of Kuban l. 3. Drumann quotes a number of passages referring to the birthdays of the kings in his Greek text to the Rosetta stone. See also Ebers, *Ægypten* I. p. 334.

magnates of the realms should be invited to the ceremony.

The streets of Babylon swarmed with strangers, the colossal palaces on both shores of the Euphrates were overfilled, and all the houses stood adorned in festal brightness.

The zeal thus displayed by his people,—this vast throng of human beings,—representing and bringing around him, as it were, his entire kingdom, contributed not a little to raise the king's spirits.

His pride was gratified; and the only longing left in his heart had been stilled by Nitetis' love. For the first time in his life he believed himself completely happy, and bestowed his gifts, not only from a sense of his duty as king of Persia, but because the act of giving was in itself a pleasure.

Megabyzus could not extol the deeds of Bartja and his friends too highly. Cambyses embraced the young warriors, gave them horses and gold chains, called them "brothers" and reminded Bartja, that he had promised to grant him a petition if he returned victorious.

At this Bartja cast down his eyes, not knowing at first in what form to begin his request, and the king answered laughing: "Look, my friends; our young hero is blushing like a girl! It seems I shall have to grant something important; so he had better wait until my birthday, and then, at supper, when the wine has given him courage, he shall whisper in my ear what he is now afraid to utter. Ask much, Bartja, I am happy myself, and wish all my friends to be happy too."

Bartja only smiled in answer and went to his mother; for he had not yet opened his heart to her on the matter which lay so near it.

He was afraid of meeting with decided opposition; but Crœsus had cleared the way for him by telling Kassandane so much in praise of Sappho, her virtues and her graces, her talents and skill, that Nitetis and Atossa maintained she must have given the old man a magic potion, and Kassandane, after a short resistance, yielded to her darling's entreaties.

"A Greek woman the lawful wife of a Persian prince of the blood!" cried the blind woman. "Unheard of! What will Cambyses say? How can we gain his consent?"

"On that matter you may be at ease, my mother," answered Bartja, "I am as certain that my brother will give his consent, as I am that Sappho will prove an ornament and honor to our house."

"Crœsus has already told me much in favor of this maiden," answered Kassandane," and it pleases me that thou hast at last resolved to marry; but nevertheless this alliance does not seem suitable for a son of Cyrus. And have you forgotten that the Achæmenidæ will probably refuse to recognize the child of a Greek mother as their future king, if Cambyses should remain childless?"

"Mother, I fear nothing; for my heart is not set upon the crown. And indeed many a king of Persia has had a mother of far lower parentage than my Sappho.[262] I feel persuaded that when my relations see the precious jewel I have won on the Nile, not one of them will chide me."

"The gods grant that Sappho may be equal to our

262. Thus for instance we read in Firdusi's Book of the Kings, that the race of Feridun was perpetuated by a female slave. And Sal, the father of Rustem, married a foreigner with whom he had fallen in love. Whether the heroes of the Persian Epos were purely

Nitetis!" answered Kassandane, "I love her as if she were my own child, and bless the day which brought her to Persia. The warm light of her eyes has melted your brother's hard heart; her kindness and gentleness bring beauty into the night of my blind old age, and her sweet earnestness and gravity have changed your sister Atossa from an unruly child into a gentle maiden. But now call them, (they are playing in the garden), and we will tell them of the new friend they are to gain through you."

"Pardon me, my mother," answered Bartja, "but I must beg you not to tell my sister until we are sure of the king's consent."

"You are right, my son. We must conceal your wish, to save Nitetis and Atossa from a possible disappointment. A bright hope unfulfilled is harder to bear than an unexpected sorrow. So let us wait for your brother's consent, and may the gods give their blessing!"

Early in the morning of the king's birthday the Persians offered their sacrifices on the shores of the Euphrates. A huge altar of silver had been raised on an artificial hill. On this a mighty fire had been kindled, from which flames and sweet odors rose towards heaven. White-robed magi fed the fire with pieces of daintily-cut sandal-wood, and stirred it with bundles of rods.

A cloth, the Paiti-dhana,[263] was bound round the

mythical personages (a fact which has never been proved) or not, still the marriage of a prince and a slave-girl was by no means an unheard-of occurrence.

263. The Persians were ordered to hold this little square piece of cloth before their mouths when they prayed. It was from 2 to 7 fingers broad. Anquetil gives a drawing of it in his *Zend-Avesta*. Strabo speaks of the *Paiti-dhâna* p. 733. He says the ends of the cloth used as a covering for the head hung down over the mouth.

heads of the priests, the ends of which covered the mouth, and thus preserved the pure fire from pollution by human breath. The victims had been slaughtered in a meadow near the river, the flesh cut into pieces,[264] sprinkled with salt, and laid out on tender grasses, sprouts of clover, myrtle-blossoms, and laurel-leaves, that the beautiful daughter of Ormuzd, the patient, sacred Earth, might not be touched by aught that was dead or bleeding.

Oropastes, the chief Destur,* now drew near the fire and cast fresh butter into it. The flames leapt up into the air and all the Persians fell on their knees and hid their faces, in the belief that the fire was now ascending to their great god and father. The Magian then took a mortar, laid some leaves and stalks of the sacred herb Haoma[265] within it, crushed them and poured the ruddy juice, the food of the gods, into the flames.

After this he raised his hands to heaven, and, while the other priests continually fed the flames into a wilder blaze by casting in fresh butter, sang a long prayer out of the sacred books. In this prayer the blessing of the gods was called down on everything pure and good, but principally on the king and his entire realm. The good spirits of light, life and truth; of all noble deeds; of the Earth, the universal giver; of the refreshing waters, the shining metals, the pastures, trees and innocent

264. Herod. I. 132. Strabo. 733. Anquetil gives descriptions and drawings of all the instruments of sacrifice used by the modern Parsees.

265. Haoma or Soma is the name of a plant, the juice of which is said to have been the food of the gods; it was tasted and poured by drops into the fire at certain religious ceremonies. Haoma was also a god. For particulars on the worship of Soma among the Arians see Windischman, *Abhandlungen der K. B. Akademie der Wissenschaften*, IV. 2.

* Priest

creatures, were praised: the evil spirits of darkness; of lying, the deceiver of mankind; of disease, death and sin; of the rigid cold; the desolating heat; of all odious dirt and vermin, were cursed, together with their father the malignant Ahriman. At the end all present joined in singing the festival prayer: "Purity and glory are sown for them that are pure and upright in heart."[266]

The sacrificial ceremony was concluded with the king's prayer, and then Cambyses, arrayed in his richest robes, ascended a splendid chariot drawn by four snow-white Nicæan horses, and studded with topazes, cornelian and amber, and was conveyed to the great reception-hall, where the deputies and officers from the provinces awaited him.

As soon as the king and his retinue had departed, the priests selected, for themselves, the best pieces of the flesh which had been offered in sacrifice, and allowed the thronging crowd to take the rest.

The Persian divinities disdained sacrifices in the light of food, requiring only the souls of the slaughtered animals, and many a poor man, especially among the priests, subsisted on the flesh of the abundant royal sacrifices.

The prayer offered up by the Magian was a model for those of the Persian people. No man was allowed to ask anything of the gods for himself alone. Every pious soul was rather to implore blessings for his nation; for was not each only a part of the whole? and did not each man share in the blessings granted to the whole kingdom? But especially they were commanded to pray for the king, in whom the realm was embodied and

266. This beautiful prayer is to be repeated by the Parsees on awaking from sleep. Anquetil, *Zend-Avesta* II. 564.

shadowed forth. It was this beautiful surrender of self for the public weal, that had made the Persians great.

The doctrines of the Egyptian priesthood represented the Pharaohs as actual divinities, while the Persian monarchs were only called "sons of the gods;"[267] yet the power of the latter was far more absolute and unfettered than that of the former; the reason for this being that the Persians had been wise enough to free themselves from priestly domination, while the Pharaohs, as we have seen, if not entirely under the dominion of the priestly caste, were yet under its influence in the most important matters.

The Egyptian intolerance of all strange religions was unknown in Asia. The conquered Babylonians were allowed by Cyrus to retain their own gods, after their incorporation in the great Asiatic kingdom. The Jews, Ionians and inhabitants of Asia Minor, in short, the entire mass of nations subject to Cambyses remained unmolested in possession of their hereditary religions and customs.

Beside the great altar, therefore, might be seen many a smaller sacrificial flame, kindled in honor of their own divinities, by the envoys from the conquered provinces to this great birthday feast.

Viewed from a distance, the immense city looked like a gigantic furnace. Thick clouds of smoke hovered over its towers, obscuring the light of the burning May sun.

By the time the king had reached the palace, the multitude who had come to take part in the festival had formed themselves into a procession of interminable

267. In later times, however, the Persian kings allowed themselves to be worshipped as gods also, though only indirectly.

length, which wandered on through the straight streets of Babylon towards the royal palace.

Their road was strewn with myrtle and palm-branches, roses, poppy and oleander-blossoms, and with leaves of the silver poplar, palm and laurel; the air perfumed with incense, myrrh, and a thousand other sweet odors. Carpets and flags waved and fluttered from the houses.

Music too was there; the shrill peal of the Median trumpet, and soft tone of the Phrygian flute; the Jewish cymbal and harp, Paphlagonian tambourines and the stringed instruments of Ionia; Syrian kettle-drums and cymbals, the shells and drums of the Arians from the mouth of the Indus, and the loud notes of the Bactrian battle-trumpets. But above all these resounded the rejoicing shouts of the Babylonian multitude, subjugated by the Persians only a few short years before, and yet, like all Asiatics, wearing their fetters with an air of gladness so long as the fear of their tyrant was before their eyes.

The fragrant odors, the blaze of color and sparkling of gold and jewels, the neighing of the horses, and shouts and songs of human beings, all united to produce a whole, at once bewildering and intoxicating to the senses and the feelings.

The messengers had not been sent up to Babylon empty-handed. Beautiful horses, huge elephants and comical monkeys; rhinoceroses and buffaloes adorned with housings and tassels; double-humped Bactrian camels with gold collars on their shaggy necks; waggon-loads of rare woods and ivory, woven goods of exquisite texture, casks of ingots and gold-dust, gold and silver vessels, rare plants for the royal gardens, and foreign

animals for the preserves, the most remarkable of which were antelopes, zebras, and rare monkeys and birds,[268] these last being tethered to a tree in full leaf and fluttering among the branches. Such were the offerings sent to the great king of Persia.

They were the tribute of the conquered nations and, after having been shown to the king, were weighed and tested by treasurers and secretaries, either declared satisfactory, or found wanting and returned, in which case the niggardly givers were condemned to bring a double tribute later.[269]

The palace-gates were reached without hindrance, the way being kept clear by lines of soldiers and whip-bearers stationed on either side of the street.

If the royal progress to the place of sacrifice, when five hundred richly-caprisoned horses had been led behind the king's chariot,[270] could be called magnificent, and the march of the envoys a brilliant spectacle, the great throne-room presented a vision of dazzling and magic beauty.

In the background, raised on six steps, each of which was guarded, as it were, by two golden dogs, stood the throne of gold; above it, supported by four golden pillars studded with precious stones, was a purple

268. We have described this procession from reliefs, for our acquaintance with which, we are in great measure indebted to Layard's excavations and an obelisk from Nimrud (Nineveh).

269. At the time of which we are writing, the kings of Persia taxed their kingdom at whatever time and to whatever extent seemed good in their own eyes. Cambyses' successor, Darius, was the first to introduce a regular system of taxation, in consequence of which he was nicknamed "the shopkeeper." Up to a much later period it still remained the duty of certain districts to send natural products to the court. Herod. I. 192. Xenoph. *Anab.* IV. 5.

270. Herod. VII. 40. 41. 54. 55. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 3. Curtius III. 3.

canopy, on which appeared two winged discs, the king's Feruer.[271]

Fan-bearers, high in office at the court, stood behind the throne, and, on either side, those who sat at the king's table, his relations and friends, and the most important among the officers of state, the priestly caste and the eunuchs.

The walls and ceiling of the entire hall were covered with plates of burnished gold, and the floor with purple carpets.

Before the silver gates lay winged bulls, and the king's body-guard—their dress consisting of a gold cuirass under a purple overcoat, and the high Persian cap, their swords in golden scabbards glittering with jewels, and their lances ornamented with gold and silver apples, —were stationed in the court of the palace. Among them the band of the "Immortals"[272] was easily to be distinguished by their stately forms and dauntless bearing.

Officers, whose duty consisted in announcing and presenting strangers, and who carried short ivory staves,

271. The Feruer or Ferwer is the spiritual part of every man—his soul and reason. It was in existence before the man was born, joins him at his birth and departs at his death. The Ferwer keeps up a war with the Diws or evil spirits, and is the element of man's preservation in life. The moment he departs, the body returns to its original elements. After death he becomes immortal if he has done well, but if his deeds have been evil he is cast into hell. It is right to call upon the Ferwer and entreat his help. He will bring the prayer before God and on this account is represented as a winged disc. *Ulmai Islam* in Vuller's *Fragmente über die Religion des Zoroaster.* We would also direct our readers, especially with reference to the Fravashis, (*in Farvardin yasht*) to Tiele. *De Godsdienst van Zarathustra.*

272. These "Immortals" owed their honorable name to the circumstance, that as soon as one of their number fell in battle, or died, his place was filled by a substitute, and thus the total number of the band never diminished—10,000 warriors were always there. This guard is said to have been organized by Cyrus. Herod. VII. 40. 41. 84. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VII. 1. VIII. 1. 2. 3. Curtius III. 3.

led the deputies into the hall, and up to the throne, where they cast themselves on the ground as though they would kiss the earth, concealing their hands in the sleeves of their robes. A cloth was bound over the mouth of every man before he was allowed to answer the king's questions, lest the pure person of the king should be polluted by the breath of common men.

Cambyses' severity or mildness towards the deputations with whose chiefs he spoke, was proportioned to the obedience of their province and the munificence of their tribute-offerings. Near the end of the train appeared an embassy from the Jews, led by two grave men with sharply-cut features and long beards. Cambyses called on them in a friendly tone to stop.

The first of these men was dressed in the fashion of the Babylonian aristocracy. The other wore a purple robe woven without seam, trimmed with bells and tassels, and held in at the waist by a girdle of blue, red and white.[273] A blue garment was thrown over his shoulders and a little bag suspended around his neck containing the sacred lots, the Urim and Thummin, adorned with twelve precious stones set in gold, and bearing the names of the tribes of Israel. The high-priest's brow was grave and thoughtful. A white cloth was wound round his head, the ends of which hung down to the shoulders.

"I rejoice to behold you once more, Belteshazzar,"[274]

273. Ewald, *Alterthümer des Volkes Israel* p. 289. 305. 333. Weiss, *Kostümkunde* I. p. 344. Winer, *Bibl. Realwörterbuch*, 3 *Aufl.* Kitto's *The Tabernacle and Furniture* Pl. III.

274. In our first edition we brought Daniel himself before our readers in the person of the Israelite who accompanies Joshua; but the later researches made by Hitzig, Lengerke, Merz, and Kuenen have rendered this inadmissible. A rich and distinguished Jew, however, from among those who had remained behind in Babylon after

exclaimed the king to the former of the two men. "Since the death of my father you have not been seen at my gate."

The man thus addressed bowed humbly and answered: "The favor of the king rejoices his servant! If it seem good unto thee, to cause the sun of thy favor to shine on me, thine unworthy servant, so hearken unto my petition for my nation, which thy great father caused to return unto the land of their fathers' sepulchres. This old man at my side, Joshua, the high-priest of our God, hath not feared the long journey to Babylon, that he might bring his request before thy face. Let his speech be pleasing in thine ears and his words bring forth fruit in thine heart."

"I foresee what ye desire of me," cried the king. "Am I wrong, priest, in supposing that your petition refers to the building of the temple in your native land?"

"Nothing can be hidden from the eyes of my lord," answered the priest, bowing low. "Thy servants in Jerusalem desire to behold the face of their ruler, and beseech thee by my mouth to visit the land of their fathers, and to grant them permission to set forward the work of the temple, concerning which thine illustrious father (the favor of our God rest upon him), made a decree."

The king answered with a smile: "You have the craft of your nation, and understand how to choose the right time and words for your petition. On my birth-

the captivity, can be introduced without further remarks; and at the same time we would mention that the writing in Cyrus's hand which induced Darius later to allow the rebuilding of the temple, is historically authentic. Ezra VI. 2–12. Zechariah 1–8. At the time of our tale Joshua was high-priest. Bunsen, *Bibelwerk* p. 324.

day it is difficult for me to refuse my faithful people even one request. I promise you, therefore, so soon as possible to visit Jerusalem and the land of your fathers."

"By so doing thou wilt make glad the hearts of thy servants," answered the priest; "our vines and olives will bear more fruit at thine approach, our gates will lift up their heads to receive thee, and Israel rejoice with shouts to meet his lord, doubly blessed if as lord of the building——"

"Enough, priest, enough!" cried Cambyses. "Your first petition, I have said it, shall not remain unfulfilled; for I have long desired to visit the wealthy city of Tyre, the golden Sidon, and Jerusalem with its strange superstitions; but were I to give permission for the building now, what would remain for me to grant you in the coming year?"

"Thy servants will no more molest thee by their petitions, if thou grant unto them this one, to finish the temple of the Lord their God," answered the priest.

"Strange beings, these men of Palestine!" exclaimed Cambyses. "I have heard it said that ye believe in one God alone, who can be represented by no likeness, and is a spirit. Think ye then that this omnipresent Being requires a house? Verily, your great spirit can be but a weak and miserable creature, if he need a covering from the wind and rain, and a shelter from the heat which he himself has created. If your God be like ours, omnipresent, fall down before him and worship as we do, in every place, and feel certain that everywhere ye will be heard of him!"

"The God of Israel hears his people in every place," exclaimed the high-priest. "He heard us when we pined in captivity under the Pharaohs far from our land;

he heard us weeping by the rivers of Babylon. He chose thy father to be the instrument of our deliverance, and will hear my prayer this day and soften thine heart likewise. O mighty king, grant unto thy servants a common place of sacrifice, whither our twelve tribes may repair, an altar on the steps of which they can pray together, a house in which to keep their holy feasts! For this permission we will call down the blessing of God upon thine head and his curse upon thine enemies."

"Grant unto my brethren the permission to build their temple!" added Belteshazzar, who was the richest and most honorable and respected of the Jews yet remaining in Babylon; a man whom Cyrus had treated with much consideration, and of whom he had even taken counsel from time to time.

"Will ye then be peaceable, if I grant your petition?" asked the king. "My father allowed you to begin the work and granted the means for its completion. Of one mind, happy and content, ye returned to your native land, but while pursuing your work strife and contention entered among you. Cyrus was assailed by repeated letters, signed by the chief men of Syria, entreating him to forbid the work, and I also have been lately besought to do the same. Worship your God when and where ye will, but just because I desire your welfare, I cannot consent to the prosecution of a work which kindles discord among you."

"And is it then thy pleasure on this day to take back a favor, which thy father made sure unto us by a written decree?" asked Belteshazzar.

"A written decree?"

"Which will surely be found even to this day laid up in the archives of thy kingdom."

"Find this decree and show it me, and I will not only allow the building to be continued, but will promote the same," answered the king; "for my father's will is as sacred to me as the commands of the gods."

"Wilt thou allow search to be made in the house of the rolls at Ecbatana?" asked Belteshazzar. "The decree will surely be found there."

"I consent, but I fear ye will find none. Tell thy nation, priest, that I am content with the equipment of the men of war they have sent to take the field against the Massagetæ. My general Megabyzus commends their looks and bearing. May thy people prove as valiant now as in the wars of my father! You, Belteshazzar, I bid to my marriage feast, and charge you to tell your fellows, Meshach and Abednego,[275] next unto you the highest in the city of Babylon, that I expect them this evening at my table."

"The God of my people Israel grant thee blessing and happiness," answered Belteshazzar bowing low before the king.

"A wish which I accept!" answered the king, "for I do not despise the power of your wonder-working great Spirit. But one word more, Belteshazzar. Many Jews have lately been punished for reviling the gods of the Babylonians. Warn your people! They bring down hatred on themselves by their stiff-necked superstition,[276] and the pride with which they declare their own great spirit to be the only true God. Take example by us;

275. We have retained the names Meshach and Abednego, as it seemed to us that none more suitable could be found for distinguished Jews living in Babylon, than those given in the Bible to Daniel's companions.

276. Tacitus (*Histor.* V. 2–5.) speaks still more severely, even harshly and bitterly, of the Jewish religion, especially of its intolerance.

we are content with our own faith and leave others to enjoy theirs in peace. Cease to look upon yourselves as better than the rest of the world. I wish you well, for a pride founded on self-respect is pleasing in mine eyes; but take heed lest pride degenerate into vain-glory. Farewell! rest assured of my favor."

The Jews then departed. They were disappointed, but not hopeless; for Belteshazzar knew well that the decree, relative to the building of the temple, must be in the archives at Ecbatana.

They were followed by a deputation from Syria, and by the Greeks of Ionia; and then, winding up the long train, appeared a band of wild-looking men, dressed in the skins of animals, whose features bespoke them foreigners in Babylon. They wore girdles and shoulder-bands of solid, unwrought gold; and of the same precious metal were their bow-cases, axes, lance-points, and the ornaments on their high fur caps. They were preceded by a man in Persian dress, whose features proved him, however, to be of the same race as his followers.[277]

The king gazed at first on these envoys with wonder; then his brow darkened, and beckoning the officer whose duty it was to present strangers, he exclaimed: "What can these men have to crave of me? If I mistake not they belong to the Massagetæ, to that people who are so soon to tremble before my vengeance. Tell them, Gobryas, that an armed host is standing on the

277. Herod. I. 215. We give this episode partly from Herod. I. 204–216., partly from Diod. II. 44. and Justin I. 8.—Ktesias, *Persica* 9. tells that Cyrus was wounded by an Indian during a battle with the Derbians, and died from the effects of the wound. In Xenophon's accounts he returns home peacefully, but this is probably only because it gives such a good opportunity of putting a beautiful dying speech into his mouth.

Median plains ready to answer their demands with the sword."

Gobryas answered, bowing low: "These men arrived this morning during the sacrifice bringing huge burdens of the purest gold to purchase your forbearance. When they heard that a great festival was being celebrated in your honor, they urgently besought to be admitted into your presence, that they might declare the message entrusted to them by their country."

The king's brow cleared and, after sharply scrutinizing the tall, bearded Massagetæ, he said: "Let them come nearer. I am curious to know what proposals my father's murderers are about to make me."

Gobryas made a sign, and the tallest and eldest of the Massagetæ came up close to the throne and began to speak loudly in his native tongue. He was accompanied by the man in a Persian dress, who, as one of Cyrus' prisoners of war, had learnt the Persian language, and now interpreted one by one the sentences uttered by the spokesman of this wandering tribe.

"We know," began the latter, "that thou, great king, art wroth with the Massagetæ because thy father fell in war with our tribe—a war which he alone had provoked with a people who had done naught to offend him."

"My father was justified in punishing your nation," interrupted the king. "Your Queen Tomyris had dared to refuse him her hand in marriage."

"Be not wroth, O King," answered the Massagetan, "when I tell thee that our entire nation approved of that act. Even a child could see that the great Cyrus only desired to add our queen to the number of his wives, hoping, in his insatiable thirst for more territories, to gain our land with her."

Cambyses was silent and the envoy went on. "Cyrus caused a bridge to be made over our boundary river, the Araxes.[278] We were not dismayed at this, and Tomyris sent word that he might save himself this trouble, for that the Massagetæ were willing either to await him quietly in their own land, leaving the passage of the river free, or to meet him in his. Cyrus decided, by the advice of the dethroned king of Lydia, (as we learnt afterwards, through some prisoners of war) on meeting us in our own land and defeating us by a stratagem. With this intention he sent at first only a small body of troops, which could be easily dispersed and destroyed by our arrows and lances, and allowed us to seize his camp without striking a blow. Believing we had defeated this insatiable conqueror, we feasted on his abundant stores, and, poisoned by the sweet unknown drink which you call wine, fell into a stupefied slumber, during which his soldiers fell upon us, murdered the greater number of our warriors and took many captives. Among the latter was the brave, young Spargapises, our queen's son.

"Hearing in his captivity, that his mother was willing to conclude peace with your nation as the price of his liberty, he asked to have his chains taken off. The request was granted, and on obtaining the use of his hands he seized a sword and stabbed himself, exclaiming: 'I sacrifice my life for the freedom of my nation.'"

"No sooner did we hear the news that the young prince we loved so well had died thus, than we assembled all the forces yet left to us from your swords and fetters.

278. The Araxes (Aras) rises in the highlands of Armenia and flows into the Caspian Sea. The stream called Araxes by Herodotus is undoubtedly the Jaxartes (the modern Sir Darya.)

Even old men and boys flew to arms to revenge our noble Spargapises, and sacrifice themselves, after his example, for Massagetan freedom. Our armies met; ye were worsted and Cyrus fell. When Tomyris found his body lying in a pool of human blood, she cried: 'Methinks, insatiable conqueror, thou art at last sated with blood!' The troop, composed of the flower of your nobility, which you call the Immortals, drove us back and carried your father's dead body forth from our closest ranks. You led them on, fighting like a lion. I know you well, and that wound across your manly face, which adorns it like a purple badge of honor, was made by the sword now hanging at my side."

A movement passed through the listening crowd; they trembled for the bold speaker's life. Cambyses, however, looked pleased, nodded approvingly to the man and answered: "Yes, I recognize you too now; you rode a red horse with golden trappings. You shall see that the Persians know how to honor courage. Bow down before this man, my friends, for never did I see a sharper sword nor a more unwearied arm than his; and such heroic courage deserves honor from the brave, whether shown by friend or foe.[279] As for you,

279. This speech corresponds with the Persian character. In Herodotus (VII. 231.) Xerxes is made to act on opposite principles, but the following epigram by Antiphilos of Byzantium, (translated by G. Burges, M. A. Trin. Coll. Cambridge) is a proof that the Greeks fully acknowledged the chivalrous feeling of the Persian nation.

A. "This purple robe, Leonidas, to thee
Has Xerxes given; for thy deeds in arms
Have won his admiration.
L. Not for me
Be this the gift. A traitor's limbs it warms
Better; and I reject it. In death's sleep
My shield throw o'er me, not a garb of gold.
A. Why midst the dead thy hate 'gainst Persians keep?
L. The love of freedom not in death is cold."

Massagetæ, I would advise you to go home quickly and prepare for war; the mere recollection of your strength and courage increases my longing to test it once more. A brave foe, by Mithras, is far better than a feeble friend. You shall be allowed to return home in peace; but beware of remaining too long within my reach, lest the thought of the vengeance I owe my father's soul should rouse my anger, and your end draw suddenly nigh."

A bitter smile played round the bearded mouth of the warrior as he made answer to this speech. "The Massagetæ deem your father's soul too well avenged already. The only son of our queen, his people's pride, and in no way inferior to Cyrus, has bled for him. The shores of the Araxes have been fertilized by the bodies of fifty thousand of my countrymen, slain as offerings for your dead king, while only thirty thousand fell there on your own side. We fought as bravely as you, but your armor is better able to resist the arrows which pierce our clothing of skins. And lastly, as the most cruel blow of all, ye slew our queen."

"Tomyris is dead?" exclaimed Cambyses interrupting him. "You mean to tell me that the Persians have killed a woman? Answer at once, what has happened to your queen?"

"Tomyris died ten months ago of grief for the loss of her only son, and I have therefore a right to say that she too fell a sacrifice to the war with Persia and to your father's spirit."

"She was a great woman," murmured Cambyses, his voice unsteady from emotion. "Verily, I begin to think that the gods themselves have undertaken to revenge my father's blood on your nation. Yet I tell you

that, heavy as your losses may seem, Spargapises, Tomyris and fifty thousand Massagetæ can never outweigh the spirit of one king of Persia, least of all of a Cyrus."

"In our country," answered the envoy, "death makes all men equal. The spirits of the king and the slave are of equal worth. Your father was a great man, but we have undergone awful sufferings for his sake. My tale is not yet ended. After the death of Tomyris discord broke out among the Massagetæ. Two claimants for the crown appeared; half our nation fought for the one, half for the other, and our hosts were thinned, first by this fearful civil war and then by the pestilence which followed in its track. We can no longer resist your power, and therefore come with heavy loads of pure gold as the price of peace."

"Ye submit then without striking a blow?" asked Cambyses. "Verily, I had expected something else from such heroes; the numbers of my host, which waits assembled on the plains of Media, will prove that. We cannot go to battle without an enemy. I will dismiss my troops and send a satrap. Be welcome as new subjects of my realm."

The red blood mounted into the cheeks of the Massagetan warrior on hearing these words, and he answered in a voice trembling with excitement: "You err, O King, if you imagine that we have lost our old courage, or learnt to long for slavery. But we know your strength; we know that the small remnant of our nation, which war and pestilence have spared, cannot resist your vast and well-armed hosts. This we admit, freely and honestly as is the manner of the Massagetæ, declaring however at the same time, that we are deter-

mined to govern ourselves as of yore, and will never receive laws or ordinances from a Persian satrap.—You are wroth, but I can bear your angry gaze and yet repeat my declaration."

"And my answer," cried Cambyses, "is this:—Ye have but one choice: either to submit to my sceptre, become united to the kingdom of Persia under the name of the Massagetan province, and receive a satrap as my representative with due reverence, or to look upon yourselves as my enemies, in which case you will be forced by arms to conform to those conditions which I now offer you in good part. To-day you could secure a ruler well-affected to your cause,—later you will find in me only a conqueror and avenger. Consider well before you answer."

"We have already weighed and considered all," answered the warrior, "and, as free sons of the desert, prefer death to bondage. Hear what the council of our old men has sent me to declare to you:—The Massagetæ have become too weak to oppose the Persians, not through their own fault, but through the heavy visitation of our god, the sun. We know that you have armed a vast host against us, and we are ready to buy peace and liberty by a yearly tribute. But if you persist in compelling us to submit by force of arms, you can only bring great damage on yourselves. The moment your army nears the Araxes, we shall depart with our wives and children and seek another home, for we have no fixed dwellings like yours, but are accustomed to rove at will on our swift horses, and to rest in tents. Our gold we shall take with us, and shall fill up, destroy, and conceal the pits in which you could find new treasures. We know every spot where

gold is to be found, and can give it in abundance, if you grant us peace and leave us our liberty; but, if you venture to invade our territory, you win nothing but an empty desert and an enemy always beyond your reach,—an enemy who may become formidable, when he has had time to recover from the heavy losses which have thinned his ranks. Leave us in peace and freedom and we are ready to give every year five thousand swift horses of the desert, besides the yearly tribute of gold; we will also come to the help of the Persian nation when threatened by any serious danger."

The envoy ceased speaking. Cambyses did not answer at once; his eyes were fixed on the ground in deep thought. At last he said, rising at the same time from his throne: "We will take counsel on this matter over the wine to-night, and to-morrow you shall hear what answer you can bring to your people. Gobryas, see that these men are well cared for, and send the Massagetan, who wounded me in battle, a portion of the best dishes from my own table."

CHAPTER XV.

During these events Nitetis had been sitting alone in her house on the hanging-gardens, absorbed in the saddest thoughts. To-day, for the first time, she had taken part in the general sacrifice made by the king's wives, and had tried to pray to her new gods in the open air, before the fire-altars and amidst the sound of religious songs strange to her ears.

Most of the inhabitants of the harem saw her to-day

for the first time, and instead of raising their eyes to heaven, had fixed them on her during the ceremony.

The inquisitive, malevolent gaze of her rivals, and the loud music resounding from the city, disquieted and distracted her mind. Her thoughts reverted painfully to the solemn, sultry stillness of the gigantic temples in her native land where she had worshipped the gods of her childhood so earnestly at the side of her mother and sister; and much as she longed, just on this day, to pray for blessings on her beloved king, all her efforts were in vain; she could arouse no devotional feeling.

Kassandane and Atossa knelt at her side, joining heartily in the very hymns which to Nitetis were an empty sound.

It cannot be denied, that many parts of these hymns contain true poetry; but they become wearisome through the constant repetition and invocation of the names of good and bad spirits. The Persian women had been taught from childhood, to look upon these religious songs as higher and holier than any other poetry. Their earliest prayers had been accompanied by such hymns, and, like everything else which has come down to us from our fathers, and which we have been told in the impressionable time of childhood is divine and worthy of our reverence, they were still sacred and dear to them and stirred their most devotional feelings.

But for Nitetis, who had been spoilt for such things by an intimate acquaintance with the best Greek poets, they could have but little charm. What she had lately been learning in Persia with difficulty had not yet become a part of herself, and so, while Kassandane and Atossa went through all the outward rites as things of course and perfectly natural to them, Nitetis could only

prevent herself from forgetting the prescribed ceremonials by a great mental effort, and dreaded lest she should expose her ignorance to the jealous, watchful gaze of her rivals.

And then, too, only a few minutes before the sacrifice, she had received her first letter from Egypt. It lay unread on her dressing-table, and came into her mind whenever she attempted to pray. She could not help wondering what news it might bring her. How were her parents? and how had Tachot borne the parting from herself, and from the prince she loved so well?

The ceremony over, Nitetis embraced Kassandane and Atossa, and drew a long, deep breath, as if delivered from some threatening danger. Then ordering her litter, she was carried back to her dwelling, and hastened eagerly to the table where her letter lay. Her principal attendant, the young girl who on the journey had dressed her in her first Persian robes, received her with a smile full of meaning and promise, which changed however, into a look of astonishment, on seeing her mistress seize the letter, without even glancing at the articles of dress and jewelery which lay on the table.

Nitetis broke the seal quickly and was sitting down, in order to begin the difficult work of reading her letter, when the girl came up, and with clasped hands, exclaimed: "By Mithras, my mistress, I cannot understand you. Either you are ill, or that ugly bit of grey stuff must contain some magic which makes you blind to everything else. Put that roll away and look at the splendid presents that the great king (Auramazda grant him victory!) has sent while you were at the sacrifice. Look at this wonderful purple robe with the white

stripe and the rich silver embroidery; and then the tiara with the royal diamonds! Do not you know the high meaning of these gifts? Cambyses begs, (the messenger said 'begs,' not 'commands') you to wear these splendid ornaments at the banquet to-day. How angry Phædime will be! and how the others will look, for they have never received such presents. Till now only Kassandane has had a right to wear the purple and diamonds; so by sending you these gifts, Cambyses places you on a level with his mother, and chooses you to be his favorite wife before the whole world.[280] O pray allow me to dress you in these new and beautiful things. How lovely you will look! How angry and envious the others will feel! If I could only be there when you enter the hall! Come, my mistress, let me take off your simple dress, and array you, (only as a trial you know,) in the robes that as the new queen you ought to wear."

Nitetis listened in silence to the chattering girl, and admired the gifts with a quiet smile. She was woman enough to rejoice at the sight, for he, whom she loved better than life itself, had sent them; and they were a proof that she was more to the king than all his other wives;—that Cambyses really loved her. The long wished-for letter fell unread to the ground, the girl's wish to dress her was granted without a word, and in a short time the splendid toilette was completed. The royal purple added to her beauty, the high flashing tiara made her slender, perfect figure seem taller than it really was, and when, in the metal mirror which lay on her dressing table, she beheld herself for the first time

280. Book of Esther I. 11. 19. II. 4. 17. V. 1. Heliodorus of Emesa, *Æthiopica* VII. 19.

in the glorious likeness of a queen, a new expression dawned on her features. It seemed as if a portion of her lord's pride were reflected there. The frivolous waiting-woman sank involuntarily on her knees, as her eyes, full of smiling admiration, met the radiant glance of Nitetis,—of the woman who was beloved by the most powerful of men.

For a few moments Nitetis gazed on the girl, lying in the dust at her feet; but soon shook her beautiful head, and blushing for shame, raised her kindly, kissed her forehead, gave her a gold bracelet, and then, perceiving her letter on the ground, told her she wished to be alone. Mandane ran, rather than walked, out of the room in her eagerness to show the splendid present she had just received to the inferior attendants and slaves; and Nitetis, her eyes glistening and her heart beating with excess of happiness, threw herself on to the ivory chair which stood before her dressing-table, uttered a short prayer of thanksgiving to her favorite Egyptian goddess, the beautiful Hathor, kissed the gold chain which Cambyses had given her after plunging into the water for her ball, then her letter from home, and rendered almost over-confident by her great happiness, began to unroll it, slowly sinking back into the purple cushions as she did so and murmuring: "How very, very happy I am! Poor letter, I am sure your writer never thought Nitetis would leave you a quarter of an hour on the ground unread."

In this happy mood she began to read, but her face soon grew serious and when she had finished, the letter fell once more to the ground.

Her eyes, whose proud glance had brought the waiting-maid to her feet, were dimmed by tears; her

head, carried so proudly but a few minutes before, now lay on the jewels which covered the table. Tears rolled down among the pearls and diamonds, as strange a contrast as the proud tiara and its unhappy, fainting wearer.

The letter read as follows:

"Ladice the wife of Amasis and Queen of Upper and Lower Egypt, to her daughter Nitetis, consort of the great King of Persia.

"It has not been our fault, my beloved daughter, that you have remained so long without news from home. The trireme by which we sent our letters for you to Ægæ was detained by Samian ships of war, or rather pirate vessels, and towed into the harbor of Astypalæa.[281]

"Polykrates' presumption increases with the continual success of his undertakings, and since his victory over the Lesbians and Milesians,[282] who endeavored to put a stop to his depredations, not a ship is safe from the attacks of his pirate vessels.

"Pisistratus is dead,[283] but his sons are friendly to Polykrates. Lygdamis is under obligations to him, and cannot hold his own in Naxos without Samian help. He has won over the Amphiktyonic council to his

281. Ægæ, a seaport town in Mysia. The Astypalæa mentioned here must not be confounded with the island of the same name, on which Dorian colonists built the town Akragas "the most beautiful town ever built by mortals." Pindar, *Pyth.* 12. 1. The castle built on the island of Samos by Polykrates, and fortified with round towers, was also called Astypalæa. Its walls were 12 feet thick, and it was garrisoned by the tyrant's Scythian body-guard. Polyænus I. 23. E. Curtius, *Geschichte von Griechenland*, p. 312.

282. Herod. III. 39.

283. Pisistratus, who has already been spoken of (Vol. I. Ch. II.) died at a great age, 527 B. C. He was succeeded by his eldest son Hippias.

side by presenting the Apollo of Delos with the neighboring island of Rhenea.[284] His fifty-oared vessels, requiring to be manned by twenty-thousand men, do immense damage to all the seafaring nations; yet not one dares to attack him, as the fortifications of his citadel and his splendid harbor are almost impregnable, and he himself always surrounded by a well-drilled body-guard.

"Through the traders, who followed the fortunate Kolæus[285] to the far west, and these pirate ships, Samos will become the richest of islands and Polykrates the most powerful of men, unless, as your father says, the gods become envious of such unchanging good fortune and prepare him a sudden and speedy downfall.

"In this fear Amasis advised Polykrates as his old friend, to put away from him the thing he held dearest, and in such a manner that he might be sure of never receiving it again. Polykrates adopted this advice and threw into the sea, from the top of the round tower on his citadel, his most valuable signet-ring, an unusually large sardonyx held by two dolphins. This ring was the work of Theodorus, and a lyre, the symbol of the ruler, was exquisitely engraved on the stone.[286]

284. Rhenea is one of the northern Cyclades. Herod. III. 39. Thucydides I. 13. III. 104.

285. In the seventh century B. C. a Samian captain named Kolæus was driven out of his course during a voyage to Egypt, and was the first Greek that passed the Pillars of Hercules (Straits of Gibraltar). Herod. IV. 152.

286. Both Pliny (37. 2.) and Solinus (38.) speak of the stone in this well-known ring as a sardonyx. In the time of Solinus the temple of Concordia possessed a ring, presented by Augustus, which was said to have belonged to Polykrates. Clemens of Alexandria says that a lyre was engraved on this ring. The Arabs of the present day tell a story very like the one in our text; their hero, however, loses his ring by accident. See the story of the clever Schuhu in Fr. Dieterici's *Reisebilder aus dem Morgenlande* I. p. 161. Schiller took

"Six days later, however, the ring was found by Polykrates' cooks in the body of a fish. He sent us news at once of this strange occurrence, but instead of rejoicing your father shook his grey head sadly, saying: 'he saw now it was impossible for any one to avoid his destiny!' On the same day he renounced the friendship of Polykrates and wrote him word, that he should endeavor to forget him in order to avoid the grief of seeing his friend in misfortune.

"Polykrates laughed at this message and returned the letters his pirates had taken from our trireme, with a derisive greeting. For the future all your letters will be sent by Syria.

"You will ask me perhaps, why I have told you this long story, which has so much less interest for you than any other home news. I answer: to prepare you for your father's state. Would you have recognized the cheerful, happy, careless Amasis in that gloomy answer to his Samian friend?

"Alas, my husband has good reason to be sad, and since you left us, my own eyes have seldom been free from tears. My time is passed either at the sick-bed of your sister or in comforting your father and guiding his steps; and though much in need of sleep I am now taking advantage of night to write these lines.

"Here I was interrupted by the nurses, calling me to your sister Tachot, your own true friend.

"How often the dear child has called you in her

the fable for his beautiful ballad from Herodotus, who gives a letter in full, written, he tells us, by Amasis to Polykrates. Herod. III. 40. We still possess seals made of sardonyx stones, as for instance, the beautifully-carved one which belonged to the king of Phœnicia, Abibal, and which is now at Florence. Gori, *Gemmæ antiquæ ex Thesauro Mediceo*, p. 56. Pl. XXII., de Luynes, *Essai sur la numismatique des satrapies de la Phénicie sous les rois Achæménides*, p. 69. Pl. XIII. 1.

feverish delirium; and how carefully she treasures your likeness in wax,[287] that wonderful portrait which bears evidence not only of the height to which Greek art has risen, but of the master hand of the great Theodorus. To-morrow it will be sent to Ægina,* to be copied in gold, as the soft wax becomes injured from frequent contact with your sister's burning hands and lips.

"And now, my daughter, you must summon all your courage to hear what I need all my strength of mind to tell—the sad story of the fate which the gods have decreed for our house.

"For three days after you left us Tachot wept incessantly. Neither our comforting words nor your father's good advice—neither offerings nor prayers—could avail to lessen her grief or divert her mind. At last on the fourth day she ceased to weep and would answer our questions in a low voice, as if resigned; but spent the greater part of every day sitting silently at her wheel. Her fingers, however, which used to be so skilful, either broke the threads they tried to spin, or lay for hours idle in her lap, while she was lost in dreams. Your father's jokes, at which she used to laugh so heartily, made no impression on her, and when I endeavored to reason with her she listened in anxious suspense.

"If I kissed her forehead and begged her to control herself, she would spring up, blushing deeply, and throw herself into my arms, then sit down again to her wheel

287. Anakreon, who lived at the time of our tale, wrote a song on a picture of Eros in wax, which he had bought of a boy for one drachma, or nine pence. Anakreon ed. Mœbius 10. Plato too uses the word κηροπλάστης, that is, sculptor in wax, in *Timæus* p. 74. But usually, fruit seems to have been the principal object imitated in wax. See Böttiger, *Kl. Schriften* II. p. 98. III. p. 304., and Becker, *Charikles* I. p. 99.

* See note 26.

and begin to pull at the threads with almost frantic eagerness; but in half an hour her hands would be lying idle in her lap again and her eyes dreamily fixed, either on the ground, or on some spot in the air. If we forced her to take part in any entertainment, she would wander among the guests totally uninterested in everything that was passing.

"We took her with us on the great pilgrimage to Bubastis, during which the Egyptians forget their usual gravity, and the shores of the Nile look like a great stage where the wild games of the satyrs are being performed by choruses, hurried on in the unrestrained wantonness of intoxication.[288] When she saw thus for the first time an entire people given up to the wildest and most unfettered mirth and enjoyment, she woke up from her silent brooding thoughts and began to weep again, as in the first days after you went away.

"Sad and perplexed, we brought our poor child back to Sais.

"Her looks were not those of a common mortal.

288. Herodotus (II. 58.) gives a description of this riotous festival. He says that it was usual for 700,000 people to undertake this pilgrimage to Bubastis on the east of the Pelusinian Nile arm, and when there to drink more wine than during the entire year beside. See also Vol. I. Note 53. Similar festivals were celebrated at Dendera, the goddess of which place, Hathor, was also called "the great one" of Bubastis. This we learn from the inscriptions. See Vol. I. Note 55. The excesses which took place on these occasions, and the entire nature and worship of the goddess Bast are undoubtedly connected with the Phœnician religion, in explanation of which connection we must remind our readers, that the Delta coast of the Mediterranean was colonized by Phœnicians at a very early period. See Ebers *Durch Gosen zum Sinai*, p. 18, 482 and 483. The fair held in Tanta, a few miles from the site of the ancient Bubastis, is a relic of this festival. We saw boats moving thither filled with screaming, laughing women, witnessed the frantic mirth of the fair, and learned that certain attributes of the Egyptian Chem had been transferred to the sacred Seijid el-Bedawi, whose grave is annually visited by many hundred thousand pilgrims. Farther particulars may be found in Ebers, *Ægypten in Bild und Wort*. I. p. 88–96.

She grew thinner, and we all fancied, taller; her complexion was white, and almost transparent, with a tender bloom on her cheek, which I can only liken to a young rose-leaf or the first faint blush of sunrise. Her eyes are still wonderfully clear and bright. It always seems to me as if they looked beyond the heaven and earth which we see.

"As she continued to suffer more and more from heat in the head and hands, while her tender limbs often shivered with a slight chill, we sent to Thebes for Thutmes, the most celebrated physician for inward complaints.

"The experienced priest shook his head on seeing your sister and foretold a serious illness. He forbade her to spin or to speak much. Potions of all kinds were given her to drink, her illness was discussed and exorcised,[289] the stars and oracles consulted, rich pres-

289. The Egyptian physicians seem to have used charms and incantations for the sick. Medical directions for these, of various kinds, have been preserved in the hieratic papyri, among which the one on medicine in Berlin is especially celebrated. It has been edited by Brugsch in his *Recueil de Monum. égyptiens* Pl. 85–107. Chabas (*Mélanges égyptol.* 1862.) has treated it very ably, and Brugsch also, see *Notice raisonnée d'un traité médical datant du XIV. siècle avant notre ère.* See also H. Brugsch *über die medizinische Kenntnisz der alten Aegypter und über ein altägyptisches medizin. Manuscript des Berl. Museums. Allgemeine Monatsschrift f. Wissenschaft u. Literatur,* 1853. This Papyrus describes the condition of a patient characteristically in the following words: "His body is heavy, the opening of his stomach is burning, his clothes are a burden to him, and though he wear many, yet he is not warm. In the night he feels thirst; the taste of his heart (stomach) is spoilt, like that of him who has eaten sycamore figs—he has a nest of inflammation within him—when he rises, he is like a man who is prevented from walking by others." Among the remedies mentioned is: "An ointment for outward application made of palm-wine, salt and incense." Spells and the magical element appear too in this manuscript. Isis is to be called upon to destroy the germs of disease, and remarkable means made use of in certain cases. In this place too I must mention the demotic Greek papyri now at Leyden, which have been rendered accessible to the literary world by Dr. Leemans' valuable work *Monuments égyptiens du Musée de Leyde.* Sect. 2. con-

ents and sacrifices made to the gods. The priest of Hathor from the island of Philæ sent us a consecrated amulet, the priest of Osiris in Abydos a lock of hair from the god himself set in gold, and Neithotep, the high-priest of our own guardian goddess, set on foot a great sacrifice, which was to restore your sister to health.

"But neither physicians nor charms were of any avail, and at last Neithotep confessed that Tachot's stars gave but little ground for hope. Just then, too, the sacred bull at Memphis died and the priests could discover no heart in his entrails, which they interpreted as prognosticating evil to our country. They have not yet succeeded in finding a new Apis, and believe that the

tains the *Recette médicale par Hémérius*. See also Sect. 15. I would here call to mind the *griechisch-ægyptischen Zauberpapyrus* edited by Parthey. The fumigations mentioned by Plutarch (Is. and Os.) as disinfectants, are very reasonable. A remarkable formula of exorcism has come down to us through a Coptic M.S. in which the writer has transformed the Egyptian divinities into the Archangels Michael, Uriel and Gabriel. Dulaurier, *recette déprécatoire*. *Journal Asiatique* IV. T. I. p. 433. Horapollo (I. 23.) speaks of amulets possessing medicinal powers, and Tacitus of oraclcs. histor. IV. 81. We could fill a larger space with similar quotations. It is strange that such remedies, even up to the present day, continue to be believed in and used, often as they have proved ineffectual. In the winter of 1872–73 we had the good fortune to bring home the largest and best of the medical Papyri yet found. See preface to fourth edition. Its publication has just been completed. It contains an inimitable copy of the one hundred and ten pages of the papyrus, an ample introduction, description of all the diseases for which remedies are prescribed, and a list, arranged in the form of a lexicon, of all words occurring in the papyrus. Although this work—which is similar to the book on Egyptian medicines for diseases of the eye mentioned by Clemens of Alexandria—does not lack forms of incantation, most of the diseases have remedies prescribed, consisting of drugs belonging to all the kingdoms of Nature, and not unfrequently brought from distant lands, compounded according to exact weights and measures. Phœnician characters are used in this venerable scroll, written in the 16th century B. C.—an extremely noteworthy and interesting fact, because the circumstance proves that even at this early period, the Egyptians, notwithstanding their aversion to foreigners, did not disdain to profit by the intellectual acquirements of their Eastern neighbors.

gods are wroth with your father's kingdom. Indeed the oracle of Buto has declared that the Immortals will show no favor to Egypt, until all the temples that have been built in the black land* for the worship of false gods are destroyed and their worshippers banished.

"These evil omens have proved, alas, only too true. Tachot fell ill of a dreadful fever and lay for nine days hovering between life and death; she is still so weak that she must be carried, and can move neither hand nor foot.

"During the journey to Bubastis, Amasis' eyes, as so often happens here,[290] became inflamed. Instead of sparing them, he continued to work as usual from sunrise until mid-day, and while your sister was so ill he never left her bed, notwithstanding all our entreaties. But I will not enter into particulars, my child. His eyes grew worse, and on the very day which brought us the news of your safe arrival in Babylon, Amasis became totally blind.

"The cheerful, active man has become old, gloomy and decrepit since that day. The death of Apis, and the unfavorable constellations and oracles weigh on his mind; his happy temper is clouded by the unbroken

290. The Egyptian eye-disease, which unfortunately is not unknown to us moderns, must have raged on the shores of the Nile in very early ages. Egyptian oculists were already very celebrated at the time of our tale. Herodotus says, that Egypt swarmed with physicians, and we find blind people represented on the monuments. Ophthalmia is fearfully frequent among the modern Egyptians. F. Pruner, *Krankheiten des Orients. Bruaut, notice sur l'opthalmie regnante.* In the *Mémoires sur l'Egypte* I. p. 95–103. See also Vol. II. Note 50. From the great Papyrus Ebers we have obtained the first accurate information concerning the knowledge possessed by the Egyptian oculists. The number of diseases of the eye known on the Nile in the 16th century B. C. is marvellous. Various remedies for granulation are given. See vol. II. note 49.

* Egypt was called by its ancient inhabitants Cham, the black, or black-earthed.

night in which he lives; and the consciousness that he cannot stir a step alone causes indecision and uncertainty. The daring and independent ruler will soon become a mere tool, by means of which the priests can work their will.

"He spends hours in the temple of Neith, praying and offering sacrifices; a number of workmen are employed there in building a tomb for his mummy, and the same number at Memphis in levelling the temple which the Greeks have begun building to Apollo. He speaks of his own and Tachot's misfortunes as a just punishment from the Immortals.

"His visits to Tachot's sick-bed are not the least comfort to her, for instead of encouraging her kindly, he endeavors to convince her that she too deserves punishment from the gods. He spends all his remarkable eloquence in trying to persuade her, that she must forget this world entirely and only try to gain the favor of Osiris and the judges of the nether world by ceaseless prayers and sacrifices. In this manner he only tortures our poor sick child, for she has not lost her love of life. Perhaps I have still too much of the Greek left in me for a queen of Egypt; but really, death is so long and life so short, that I cannot help calling even wise men foolish, when they devote the half of even this short term to a perpetual meditation on the gloomy Hades.

"I have just been interrupted again. Our great physician, Thutmes, came to enquire after his patient. He gives very little hope, and seems surprised that her delicate frame has been able to resist death so long. He said yesterday: 'She would have sunk long ago if not kept up by her determined will, and a longing which

gives her no rest. If she ceased to care for life, she could allow death to take her, just as we dream ourselves asleep. If, on the other hand, her wish could be gratified, she might, (though this is hardly probable) live some years yet, but if it remain but a short time longer unfulfilled, it will certainly wear her to death.'

"Have you any idea for whom she longs so eagerly? Our Tachot has allowed herself to be fascinated by the beautiful Bartja, the brother of your future husband. I do not mean to say by this that he has employed magic, as the priest Ameneman believes, to gain her love; for a youth might be far less handsome and agreeable than Bartja, and yet take the heart of an innocent girl, still half a child. But her passionate feeling is so strong, and the change in her whole being so great, that sometimes I too am tempted to believe in the use of supernatural influence. A short time before you left I noticed that Tachot was fond of Bartja. Her distress at first we thought could only be for you, but when she sank into that dreamy state, Ibykus, who was still at our court, said she must have been seized by some strong passion.

"Once when she was sitting dreaming at her wheel, I heard him singing softly Sappho's little love-song to her:

"I cannot, my sweet mother,
Throw shuttle any more;
My heart is full of longing,
My spirit troubled sore,
All for a love of yesterday
A boy not seen before."[291]

"She turned pale and asked him: 'Is that your own song?'

291. Sappho ed. Neue XXXII. Translation from Edwin Arnold's Poets of Greece.

"'No,' said he, 'Sappho wrote it fifty years ago.'

"'Fifty years ago,' echoed Tachot musingly.

"'Love is always the same,' interrupted the poet; 'women loved centuries ago, and will love thousands of years to come, just as Sappho loved fifty years back.'

"The sick girl smiled in assent, and from that time I often heard her humming the little song as she sat at her wheel. But we carefully avoided every question, that could remind her of him she loved. In the delirium of fever, however, Bartja's name was always on her burning lips. When she recovered consciousness we told her what she had said in her delirium; then she opened her heart to me, and raising her eyes to heaven like a prophetess, exclaimed solemnly: 'I know, that I shall not die till I have seen him again.'

"A short time ago we had her carried into the temple, as she longed to worship there again. When the service was over and we were crossing the temple-court, we passed some children at play, and Tachot noticed a little girl telling something very eagerly to her companions. She told the bearers to put down the litter and call the child to her.

"'What were you saying?' she asked the little one.

"'I was telling the others something about my eldest sister.'

"'May I hear it too?' said Tachot so kindly, that the little girl began at once without fear: "Batau, who is betrothed to my sister, came back from Thebes quite unexpectedly yesterday evening. Just as the Isis-star[292] was rising, he came suddenly on to our roof where

292. Among the Egyptians the planet Venus bore the name of the goddess Isis. Pliny II. 6. Arist. *De mundo* II. 7. Early monuments prove that they were acquainted with the identity of the morning and evening star. Lepsius, *Chronologie* p. 94.

Kerimama was playing at draughts with my father; and he brought her such a beautiful golden bridal wreath.'

"Tachot kissed the child and gave her her own costly fan. When we were at home again she smiled archly at me and said: 'You know, mother dear, that the words children say in the temple-courts are believed to be oracles.[293] So, if the little one spoke the truth, he must come; and did not you hear that he is to bring the bridal-wreath? O mother, I am sure, quite sure, that I shall see him again.'

"I asked her yesterday if she had any message for you, and she begged me to say that she sent you thousands of kisses, and messages of love, and that when she was stronger she meant to write, as she had a great deal to tell you. She has just brought me the little note which I enclose; it is for you alone, and has cost her much fatigue to write.

"But now I must finish my letter, as the messenger has been waiting for it some time.

"I wish I could give you some joyful news, but sadness and sorrow meet me whichever way I turn. Your brother yields more and more to the priests' tyranny, and manages the affairs of state for your poor blind father under Neithotep's guidance.

"Amasis does not interfere, and says it matters little whether his place be filled a few days sooner or later by his successor.

"He did not attempt to prevent Psamtik from seizing the children of Phanes in Rhodopis' house, and actually allowed his son to enter into a negotiation with the descendants of those two hundred thousand

293. Plutarch, *I. and O.* 14. Pausanias VII. 22.

soldiers,[294] who emigrated to Ethiopia in the reign of Psamtik I. on account of the preference shown to the Greek mercenaries. In case they declared themselves willing to return to their native land, the Greek mercenaries were to have been dismissed. The negotiation failed entirely, but Psamtik's treatment of the children of Phanes has given bitter offence to the Greeks. Aristomachus threatened to leave Egypt, taking with him ten thousand of his best troops, and on hearing that Phanes' son had been murdered at Psamtik's command applied for his discharge. From that time the Spartan disappeared, no one knows whither; but the Greek troops allowed themselves to be bribed by immense sums and are still in Egypt.

"Amasis said nothing to all this, and looked on silently from the midst of his prayers and sacrifices, while your brother was either offending every class of his subjects or attempting to pacify them by means beneath the dignity of a ruler. The commanders of the Egyptian and Greek troops, and the governors of different provinces have all alike assured me that the present state of things is intolerable. No one knows what to expect from this new ruler; he commands to-day the very thing, which he angrily forbade the day before. Such a government must soon snap the beautiful bond, which has hitherto united the Egyptian people to their king.

"Farewell, my child, think of your poor friend, your mother; and forgive your parents when you hear

294. According to Herodotus (II. 29-31.) 240,000 men. According to Diod. (I. 67.) more than 200,000. In the great rock-temple of Rameses II. at Abusimbel in Nubia, Greek and Phœnician inscriptions have been found written by the pursuers of these fugitives. Lepsius, *Denkmäler* IV. Bl. 98 and 99. Ebers, *Aegypten und die Bücher Moses* p. 162.

what they have so long kept secret from you. Pray for Tachot, and remember us to Crœsus and the young Persians whom we know. Give a special message too from Tachot to Bartja; I beg him to think of it as the last legacy of one very near death. If you could only send her some proof, that he has not forgotten her!

"Farewell, once more farewell and be happy in your new and blooming home."

CHAPTER XVI.

Sad realities follow bright anticipations nearly as surely as a rainy day succeeds a golden sunrise.

Nitetis had been so happy in the thought of reading the very letter, which poured such bitter drops of wormwood into her cup of happiness.

One beautiful element in her life, the remembrance of her dear home and the companions of her happy childhood, had been destroyed in one moment, as if by the touch of a magician's wand.

She sat there in her royal purple, weeping, forgetful of everything but her mother's grief, her father's misfortunes and her sister's illness. The joyful future, full of love, joy, and happiness, which had been beckoning her forward only a few minutes before, had vanished. Cambyses' chosen bride forgot her waiting, longing lover, and the future queen of Persia could think of nothing but the sorrows of Egypt's royal house.

It was long past mid-day, when the attendant Mandane came to put a last touch to Nitetis' dress and ornaments.

"She is asleep," thought the girl. "I can let her rest another quarter of an hour; the sacrifice this morning has tired her, and we must have her fresh and beautiful for the evening banquet; then she will outshine the others as the moon does the stars."

Unnoticed by her mistress she slipped out of the room, the windows of which commanded a splendid view over the hanging-gardens, the immense city beneath, the river, and the rich and fruitful Babylonian plain, and went into the garden.

Without looking round she ran to a flower-bed, to pluck some roses. Her eyes were fixed on her new bracelet, the stones of which sparkled in the sun, and she did not notice a richly-dressed man peering in at one of the windows of the room where Nitetis lay weeping. On being disturbed in his watching and listening, he turned at once to the girl and greeted her in a high treble voice.

She started, and on recognizing the eunuch Boges, answered: "It is not polite, sir, to frighten a poor girl in this way. By Mithras, if I had seen you before I heard you, I think I should have fainted. A woman's voice does not take me by surprise, but to see a man here is as rare as to find a swan in the desert."

Boges laughed good-humoredly, though he well understood her saucy allusion to his high voice, and answered, rubbing his fat hands: "Yes, it is very hard for a young and pretty bird like you, to have to live in such a lonely corner, but be patient, sweetheart. Your mistress will soon be queen, and then she will look out a handsome young husband for you. Ah, ha! you will find it pleasanter to live here alone with him, than with your beautiful Egyptian."

"My mistress is *too* beautiful for some people's fancy, and I have never asked any one to look out a husband for me," she answered pertly. "I can find one without your help either."

"Who could doubt it? Such a pretty face is as good a bait for a man, as a worm for a fish."

"But I am not trying to catch a husband, and least of all one like you."

"That I can easily believe," he answered laughing. "But tell me, my treasure, why are you so hard on me? Have I done anything to vex you? Wasn't it through me, that you obtained this good appointment, and are not we both Medes?"

"You might just as well say that we are both human beings, and have five fingers on each hand and a nose in the middle of our faces. Half the people here are Medes, and if I had as many friends as I have countrymen, I might be queen to-morrow. And as to my situation here, it was not you, but the high-priest Oropastes who recommended me to the great queen Kassandane. Your will is not law here,"

"What are you talking about, my sweet one? don't you know, that not a single waiting-woman can be engaged without my consent?"

"Oh, yes, I know that as well as you do, but . . ."

"But you women are an unthankful race, and don't deserve our kindness."

"Please not to forget, that you are speaking to a girl of good family."

"I know that very well, my little one. I know that your father was a Magian and your mother a Magian's daughter; that they both died early and you were placed under the care of the Destur Ixabates, the father of

Oropastes, and grew up with his children. I know too that when you had received the ear-rings, Oropastes' brother Gaumata,[295] (you need not blush, Gaumata is a pretty name) fell in love with your rosy face, and wanted to marry you, though he was only nineteen. Gaumata and Mandane, how well the two names sound together! Mandane and Gaumata! If I were a poet I should call my hero Gaumata and his lady-love Mandane."

"I insist on your ceasing to jest in this way," cried Mandane, blushing deeply and stamping her foot.

"What, are you angry because I say the names sound well together? You ought rather to be angry with the proud Oropastes, who sent his younger brother to Rhagæ[296] and you to the court, that you might forget one another."

"That is a slander on my benefactor."

"Let my tongue wither away, if I am not speaking the truth and nothing but the truth! Oropastes separated you and his brother because he had higher intentions for the handsome Gaumata, than a marriage with the orphan daughter of an inferior Magian. He would have been satisfied with Amytis or Menische for a sister-in-law, but a poor girl like you, who owed everything to his bounty, would only have stood in the way of his ambitious plans. Between ourselves, he would

295. Known among the Greeks by the name of Smerdis. But in the cuneiform inscriptions he is called Gumata, or according to Spiegel, Gaumâta. *Inscription of Behistân* XI. Justin I. 9. gives the correct name, though somewhat disfigured, and calls Smerdis, Kometes. For this reason we have taken the name Oropastes also from him, though Herod. III. 61. gives Patizeithes.

296. Rhagæ (Rhagai), in the time of Alexander Europes,—later, under Seleucus Nicator, Arsacia,—and now called Rai, is one of the oldest towns in Persia. Zoroaster is said to have been born here, and the same is told of *Haroun-er-raschid*. In the Apochrypha Tobit is said to have been cast ashore at Rages. In this town there was a famous school for priests.

like to be appointed regent of Persia while the king is away at the Massagetan war, and would therefore give a great deal to connect himself by marriage in some way or other with the Achæmenidæ. At his age a new wife is not to be thought of; but his brother is young and handsome, indeed people go so far as to say, that he is like the Prince Bartja."

"That is true," exclaimed the girl. "Only think, when we went out to meet my mistress, and I saw Bartja for the first time from the window of the station-house, I thought he was Gaumata. They are so like one another that they might be twins, and they are the handsomest men in the kingdom."

"How you are blushing, my pretty rose-bud! But the likeness between them is not quite so great as all that. When I spoke to the high-priest's brother this morning . . ."

"Gaumata is here?" interrupted the girl passionately. "Have you really seen him or are you trying to draw me out and make fun of me?"

"By Mithras! my sweet one, I kissed his forehead this very morning, and he made me tell him a great deal about his darling. Indeed his blue eyes, his golden curls and his lovely complexion, like the bloom on a peach, were so irresistible that I felt inclined to try and work impossibilities for him. Spare your blushes, my little pomegranate-blossom, till I have told you all; and then perhaps in future you will not be so hard upon poor Boges; you will see that he has a good heart, full of kindness for his beautiful, saucy little country-woman."

"I do not trust you," she answered, interrupting these assurances. "I have been warned against your

smooth tongue, and I do not know what I have done to deserve this kind interest."

"Do you know this?" he asked, showing her a white ribbon embroidered all over with little golden flames.

"It is the last present I worked for him," exclaimed Mandane.

"I asked him for this token, because I knew you would not trust me. Who ever heard of a prisoner loving his jailer?"

"But tell me at once, quickly—what does my old playfellow want me to do? Look, the—western sky is beginning to glow. Evening is coming on, and I must arrange my mistress's dress and ornaments for the banquet."

"Well, I will not keep you long," said the eunuch, becoming so serious that Mandane was frightened. "If you do not choose to believe that I would run into any risk out of friendship to you, then fancy that I forward your love affair to humble the pride of Oropastes. He threatens to supplant me in the king's favor, and I am determined, let him plot and intrigue as he likes, that you shall marry Gaumata. To-morrow evening, after the Tistar-star has risen,[297] your lover shall come to see you. I will see that all the guards are away, so that he can come without danger, stay one hour and talk over the future with you; but remember, only one hour. I see clearly that your mistress will be Cambyses' favorite

297. The Tistar-star, (probably Sirius or the dog-star) in the Avesta, *Tistrija*, and in the Vedas, Tishija, was invoked by the Persians as a brilliant, powerful star, which brought the rain so valuable in Persia. It is often mentioned in the Parsee sacred books. Spiegel *Avesta* I. 1, *Excurs.* p. 274. Many Jashts treat of this star. Anquetil in his *Vie de Zoroaster* p. 1. ventures to derive the name Zerethoschtro from "*zere*" gold, and "*thaschtre*" Tistar-star.

wife, and will then forward your marriage, for she is very fond of you, and thinks no praise too high for your fidelity and skill. So to-morrow evening," he continued, falling back into the jesting tone peculiar to him, "when the Tistar-star rises, fortune will begin to shine on you. Why do you look down? Why don't you answer? Gratitude stops your pretty little mouth, eh? is that the reason? Well, my little bird, I hope you won't be quite so silent, if you should ever have a chance of praising poor Boges to your powerful mistress. And what message shall I bring to the handsome Gaumata? May I say that you have not forgotten him and will be delighted to see him again? You hesitate? Well, I am very sorry, but it is getting dark and I must go. I have to inspect the women's dresses for the birthday banquet. Ah! one thing I forgot to mention. Gaumata must leave Babylon to-morrow. Oropastes is afraid, that he may chance to see you, and told him to return to Rhagæ directly the festival was over. What! still silent? Well then, I really cannot help you or that poor fellow either. But I shall gain my ends quite as well without you, and perhaps after all it is better that you should forget one another. Good-bye."

It was a hard struggle for the girl. She felt nearly sure that Boges was deceiving her, and a voice within warned her that it would be better to refuse her lover this meeting. Duty and prudence gained the upper hand, and she was just going to exclaim: "Tell him I cannot see him," when her eye caught the ribbon she had once embroidered for her handsome playfellow. Bright pictures from her childhood flashed through her mind, short moments of intoxicating happiness; love, recklessness and longing gained the day in their

turn over her sense of right, her misgivings and her prudence, and before Boges could finish his farewell, she called out, almost in spite of herself and flying towards the house like a frightened fawn: "I shall expect him."

Boges passed quickly through the flowery paths of the hanging-gardens. He stopped at the parapet and cautiously opened a hidden trap-door, admitting to a secret staircase which wound down through one of the huge pillars supporting the hanging-gardens, and which had probably been intended by their original designer as a means of reaching his wife's apartments unobserved from the shores of the river. The door moved easily on its hinges, and when Boges had shut it again and strewed a few of the river-shells from the garden walks over it, it would have been difficult to find, even for any one who had come with that purpose. The eunuch rubbed his jeweled hands, smiling the while as was his custom, and murmured: "It can't fail to succeed now; the girl is caught, her lover is at my beck and call, the old secret flight of steps is in good order, Nitetis has been weeping bitterly on a day of universal rejoicing, and the blue lily opens to-morrow night. Ah, ha! my little plan can't possibly fail now. And to-morrow, my pretty Egyptian kitten, your little velvet paw will be fast in a trap set by the poor despised eunuch, who was not allowed, forsooth, to give you any orders."

His eyes gleamed maliciously as he said these words and hurried from the garden.

At the great flight of steps he met another eunuch, named Neriglissar, who held the office of head-gardener, and lived at the hanging-gardens.

"How is the blue lily going on?" asked Boges.

"It is unfolding magnificently!" cried the gardener, in enthusiasm at the mere mention of his cherished flower. "To-morrow, as I promised, when the Tistar-star rises, it will be in all its beauty. My Egyptian mistress will be delighted, for she is very fond of flowers, and may I ask you to tell the king and the Achæmenidæ, that under my care this rare plant has at last flowered? It is to be seen in full beauty only once in every ten years. Tell the noble Achæmenidæ this, and bring them here."

"Your wish shall be granted," said Boges smiling, "but I think you must not reckon on the king, as I do not expect he will visit the hanging-gardens before his marriage with the Egyptian. Some of the Achæmenidæ, however, will be sure to come; they are such lovers of horticulture that they would not like to miss this rare sight. Perhaps, too, I may succeed in bringing Crœsus. It is true that he does not understand flowers or doat on them as the Persians do, but he makes amends for this by his thorough appreciation of everything beautiful."

"Yes, yes, bring him too," exclaimed the gardener. "He will really be grateful to you, for my queen of the night is the most beautiful flower, that has ever bloomed in a royal garden. You saw the bud in the clear waters of the reservoir surrounded by its green leaves; that bud will open into a gigantic rose, blue as the sky. My flower . . ."

The enthusiastic gardener would have said much more in praise of his flower, but Boges left him with a friendly nod, and went down the flight of steps. A two-wheeled wooden carriage was waiting for him there; he took his seat by the driver, the horses, decked

out with bells and tassels,[298] were urged into a sharp trot and quickly brought him to the gate of the harem-garden.

That day was a busy, stirring one in Cambyses' harem. In order that the women might look their very best, Boges had commanded that they should all be taken to the bath before the banquet. He therefore went at once to that wing of the palace, which contained the baths for the women.

While he was still at some distance a confused noise of screaming, laughing, chattering and tittering reached his ears. In the broad porch of the large bathing-room, which had been almost overheated, more than three hundred women[299] were moving about in a dense cloud of steam. The half-naked forms floated over the warm pavement like a motley crowd of phantoms. Their thin silken garments were wet through and clung to their delicate figures, and a warm rain descended upon them from the roof of the bath, rising up again in vapor when it reached the floor.

Groups of handsome women, ten or twenty together,

298. From pictures in Gosse's *Assyria* p. 224. 251. and Layard's *Nineveh and its remains* p. 288. *Nin. and Babylon.* p. 198. 340. 450.

299. We read in Diodorus XVII. 77. that the king of Persia had as many wives as there are days in the year. At the battle of Issus, Alexander the Great took 329 concubines, of the last Darius, captive. See also Esther I. 9. 18. II. 2. and following verses. Herod. III. 68. 69. 84. 88. and in many other passages. But it must be observed that the large numbers above mentioned only refer to the concubines. After the insurrection of the Magi had been put down, it was agreed among the great Persian lords, that the king should only be allowed to choose his lawful wives from among their daughters. Herod. III. 84. This law seems to have been observed almost without a single exception. Later Darius had four lawful wives, amongst whom Atossa always retained the highest place. v. Hammer's opinion (which is difficult to refute) that the permission to marry four wives, given by Mahomet, was derived from an ancient Oriental custom, is partly grounded on this fact. v. Hammer, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches* vol. I. p. 565.

lay gossiping saucily in one part of the room; in another two king's wives were quarrelling like naughty children. One beauty was screaming at the top of her voice because she had received a blow from her neighbor's dainty little slipper, while another was lying in lazy contemplation, still as death, on the damp, warm floor. Six Armenians were standing together, singing a saucy love-song in their native language with clear-toned voices, and a little knot of fair-haired Persians were slandering Nitetis so fearfully, that a by-stander would have fancied our beautiful Egyptian was some awful monster, like those nurses used to frighten children.

Naked female slaves moved about through the crowd, carrying on their heads well-warmed cloths to throw over their mistresses. The cries of the eunuchs, who held the office of door-keepers, and were continually urging the women to greater haste,—the screeching calls of those whose slaves had not yet arrived,—the penetrating perfumes and the warm vapor combined to produce a motley, strange and stupefying scene.

A quarter of an hour later, however, the king's wives presented a very different spectacle.

They lay like roses steeped in dew, not asleep, but quite still and dreaming, on soft cushions placed along the walls of an immense room. The wet perfumes still lay on their undried and flowing hair, and nimble female slaves were busied in carefully wiping away, with little bags made of soft camels' hair, the slightest outward trace of the moisture which penetrated deep into the pores of the skin.

Silken coverlets were spread over their weary, beautiful limbs, and a troop of eunuchs took good care

that the dreamy repose of the entire body should not be disturbed by quarrelsome or petulant individuals.

Their efforts, however, were seldom so successful as to-day, when every one knew that a disturbance of the peace would be punished by exclusion from the banquet.

They had probably been lying a full hour in this dreamy silence, when the sound of a gong produced another transformation.

The reposing figures sprang from their cushions, a troop of female slaves pressed into the hall, the beauties were annointed and perfumed, their luxuriant hair ingeniously braided, plaited, and adorned with precious stones. Costly ornaments and silken and woolen robes in all the colors of the rainbow were brought in,—shoes stiff with rich embroidery of pearls and jewels were tied on to their tender feet, and golden girdles fastened round their waists.[300]

By the time Boges came in, the greater number of the women were already fully adorned in their costly jewelry, which would have represented probably, when taken together, the riches of a large kingdom.

He was greeted by a shrill cry of joy from many voices. Twenty of the women joined hands and danced round their smiling keeper, singing a simple song which had been composed in the harem in praise of his virtues. On this day it was customary for the king to grant each of his wives one reasonable petition. So when the ring of dancers had loosed hands, a troop of petitioners rushed in upon Boges, kissing his hands, stroking his cheeks, whispering in his ear all kinds of

300. Some kings gave their wives the revenues of entire cities as "girdle-money" (pin-money). Xenoph. *Anab.* I. 4. Cicero, *Verr.* III. 83. Expensive shoes. Judith XVI. 9. See Herodotus III. 130. on the well-filled jewel caskets of the Persian women.

requests, and trying by flattery to gain his intercession with the king. The woman's tyrant smiled at it all, stopped his ears and pushed them all back with jests and laughter, promising Amytis the Median that Esther the Phœnician should be punished, and Esther the same of Amytis,—that Parmys should have a handsomer set of jewels than Parisatys,[301] and Parisatys a more costly one than Parmys, but finding it impossible to get rid of these importunate petitioners, he blew a little golden whistle. Its shrill tones acted like magic on the eager crowd; the raised hands fell in a moment, the little tripping feet stood still, the opening lips closed and the eager tumult was turned into a dead silence.

Whoever disobeyed the sound of this little whistle, was certain of punishment. It was as important as the words "Silence, in the king's name!" or the reading of the riot-act. To-day it worked even more effectually than usual. Boges' self-satisfied smile showed that he had noticed this; he then favored the assembly with a look expressive of his contentment with their conduct, promised in a flowery speech to exert all his influence with the king in behalf of his dear little white doves, and wound up by telling them to arrange themselves in two long rows.

The women obeyed and submitted to his scrutiny like soldiers on drill, or slaves being examined by their buyer.

With the dress and ornaments of most he was satisfied, ordering, however, to one a little more rouge,—to another a little white powder to subdue a too healthy color,—here a different arrangement of the hair—there

301. This name signifies "of the race of the Peris." According to Rogge it is really *Pairikazana*, *Pairikagaona* or *Pairikanâfa*.

a deeper tinge to the eyebrows, or more pains to be taken in anointing the lips.

When this was over he left the hall and went to Phædime, who as one of the king's lawful wives, had a private room, separated from those allotted to the concubines.

This former favorite,—this humbled daughter of the Achæmenidæ,—had been expecting him already some time.

She was magnificently dressed, and almost overloaded with jewels. A thick veil of gauze inwrought with gold hung from her little tiara, and interlaced with this was the blue and white band of the Achæmenidæ. There could be no question that she was beautiful, but her figure was already too strongly developed, a frequent result of the lazy harem life among Eastern women. Fair golden hair, interwoven with little silver chains and gold pieces, welled out almost too abundantly from beneath her tiara, and was smoothed over her white temples.

She sprang forward to meet Boges, trembling with eagerness, caught a hasty glance at herself in the looking-glass, and then, fixing her eyes on the eunuch, asked impetuously: "Are you pleased with me? Will he admire me?"

Boges smiled his old, eternal smile and answered: "You always please *me*, my golden peacock, and the king would admire you too if he could see you as you were a moment ago. You were really beautiful when you called out, 'Will he admire me?' for passion had turned your blue eyes black as night, and your lip was curled with hatred so as to show two rows of teeth white as the snow on the Demawend!"

Phædime was flattered and forced her face once more into the admired expression, saying: "Then take us at once to the banquet, for I know my eyes will be darker and more brilliant, and my teeth will gleam more brightly, when I see that Egyptian girl sitting where I ought to sit."

"She will not be allowed to sit there long."

"What! is your plan likely to succeed then? Oh, Boges, do not hide it any longer from me—I will be as silent as the grave—I will help you—I will—"

"No, I cannot, I dare not tell you about it, but this much I will say in order to sweeten this bitter evening: we have dug the pit for our enemy, and if my golden Phædime will only do what I tell her, I hope to give her back her old place, and not only that, but even a higher one."

"Tell me what I am to do; I am ready for anything and everything."

"That was well and bravely spoken; like a true lioness. If you obey me we must succeed; and the harder the task, the higher the reward. Don't dispute what I am going to say, for we have not a minute to lose. Take off all your useless ornaments and only wear the chain the king gave you on your marriage. Put on a dark simple dress instead of this bright one; and when you have prostrated yourself before Kassandane, bow down humbly before the Egyptian Princess too."

"Impossible!"

"I will not be contradicted. Take off those ornaments at once, I entreat you. There, that is right. We cannot succeed unless you obey me. How white your neck is! The fairest Peri would look dark by your side."

"But——"

"When your turn comes to ask a favor of the king, tell him you have no wishes, now that the sun of your life has withdrawn his light."

"Yes, that I will do."

"When your father asks after your welfare, you must weep."

"I will do that too."

"And so that all the Achæmenidæ can see that you are weeping."

"That will be a fearful humiliation!"

"Not at all; only a means by which to rise the more surely. Wash the red color from your cheeks and put on white powder. Make yourself pale—paler still."

"Yes, I shall need that to hide my blushes. Boges, you are asking something fearful of me, but I will obey you if you will only give me a reason."

"Girl, bring your mistress's new dark green robe."

"I shall look like a slave."

"True grace is lovely even in rags."

"The Egyptian will completely eclipse me."

"Yes, every one must see that you have not the slightest intention of comparing yourself with her. Then people will say: 'Would not Phædime be as beautiful as this proud woman, if she had taken the same pains to make herself so?'"

"But I cannot bow down to her."

"You must."

"You only want to humble and ruin me."

"Short-sighted fool! listen to my reasons and obey. I want especially to excite the Achæmenidæ against our enemy. How it will enrage your grandfather Intaphernes,

and your father Otanes to see you in the dust before a stranger! Their wounded pride will bring them over to our side, and if they are too 'noble,' as they call it, to undertake anything themselves against a woman, still they will be more likely to help than to hinder us, if I should need their assistance. Then, when the Egyptian is ruined, if you have done as I wish, the king will remember your sad pale face, your humility and forgetfulness of self. The Achæmenidæ, and even the Magi, will beg him to take a queen from his own family; and where in all Persia is there a woman who can boast of better birth than you? Who else *can* wear the royal purple but my bright bird of Paradise, my beautiful rose Phædime? With such a prize in prospect we must no more fear a little humiliation than a man who is learning to ride fears a fall from his horse."

And she, princess as she was, answered: "I will obey you."

"Then we are certain of victory," said the eunuch. "There, now your eyes are flashing darkly again as I like to see them, my queen. And so Cambyses shall see you when the tender flesh of the Egyptian shall have become food for dogs and the birds of the air, and when, for the first time after long months of absence, I bring him once more to the door of your apartments. Here, Armorges! tell the rest of the women to get ready and enter their litters. I will go on and be there to show them their places."

The great banqueting-hall was bright as day—even brighter,—from the light of thousands of candles whose rays were reflected in the gold plates forming the panel-

ling of the walls. A table of interminable length stood in the middle of the hall, overloaded with gold and silver cups, plates, dishes, bowls, jugs, goblets, ornaments and incense-altars, and looked like a splendid scene from fairy-land.

"The king will soon be here," called out the head-steward of the table, of the great court-lords, to the king's cup-bearer, who was a member of the royal family. "Are all the wine-jugs full, has the wine been tasted, are the goblets ranged in order, and the skins sent by Polykrates, have they been emptied?"

"Yes," answered the cup-bearer, "everything is ready, and that Chian wine is better than any I ever tasted; indeed, in my opinion, even the Syrian[302] is not to be compared to it. Only taste it."

So saying he took a graceful little golden goblet from the table in one hand, raised a wine-pitcher of the same costly metal with the other, swung the latter high into the air and poured the wine so cleverly into the narrow neck of the little vessel that not a drop was lost, though the liquid formed a wide curve in its descent. He then presented the goblet to the head-steward with the tips of his fingers, bowing gracefully as he did so.[303]

The latter sipped the delicious wine, testing its flavor with great deliberation, and said, on returning the cup: "I agree with you, it is indeed a noble wine, and tastes twice as well when presented with such inimitable grace. Strangers are quite right in saying that there are no cup-bearers like the Persian."

302. The Chian wine was the most esteemed by the Greeks. The wine of Byblus (Gebal) in Syria was celebrated on account of its exquisite flavor.

303. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* I. 3. 8. praises the Persian cup-bearers highly for their dexterity and grace.

"Thanks for this praise," replied the other, kissing his friend's forehead. "Yes, I am proud of my office, and it is one which the king only gives to his friends. Still it is a great plague to have to stay so long in this hot, suffocating Babylon. Shall we ever be off for the summer, to Ecbatana or Pasargadæ?"

"I was talking to the king about it to-day. He had intended not to leave before the Massagetan war, and to go straight from Babylon into the field, but to-day's embassy has changed matters; it is probable that there may be no war, and then we shall go to Susa three days after the king's marriage—that is, in one week from the present time."

"To Susa?" cried the cup-bearer. "It's very little cooler there than here, and besides, the old Memnon's castle is being rebuilt."[304]

"The satrap of Susa has just brought word that the new palace is finished, and that nothing so brilliant has ever been seen. Directly Cambyses heard, it he said: 'Then we will start for Susa three days after our marriage. I should like to show the Egyptian Princess that we understand the art of building as well as her own ancestors. She is accustomed to hot weather on the Nile, and will not find our beautiful Susa too warm.' The king seems wonderfully fond of this woman."

"He does indeed! All other women have become perfectly indifferent to him, and he means soon to make her his queen."

304. The citadel of Susa was called by the ancients, and also by Ktesias, who lived a long time at the Persian court as physician, the castle of Memnon. Ktesias, in Diodor. II. 22. Herod. VII. 151. V. 53. 54. Æschylus in Strabo p. 718. In Fr. Jacobs' *vermischten Schriften* the best remarks on Memnon, as a mythical character, are to be found.

"That is unjust; Phædime, as daughter of the Achæmenidæ, has an older and better right."

"No doubt, but whatever the king wishes, must be right."

"The ruler's will is the will of God."

"Well said! A true Persian will kiss his king's hand, even when dripping with the blood of his own child."

"Cambyses ordered my brother's execution, but I bear him no more ill-will for it than I should the gods for depriving me of my parents. Here, you fellows! draw the curtains back; the guests are coming. Look sharp, you dogs, and do your duty! Farewell, Artabazos, we shall have warm work to-night."

END OF VOLUME I.

GEORG EBERS

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS

THE HISTORICAL ROMANCES OF GEORG EBERS

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS

VOLUME TWO

Translated from the German by
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Authorized Edition.

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE principal steward of the banquet went forward to meet the guests as they entered, and, assisted by other noble staff-bearers (chamberlains and masters of the ceremonies), led them to their appointed places.

When they were all seated, a flourish of trumpets announced that the king was near. As he entered the hall every one rose, and the multitude received him with a thundering shout of "Victory to the king!" again and again repeated.

The way to his seat was marked by a purple Sardian carpet, only to be trodden by himself and Kassandane. His blind mother, led by Crœsus, went first and took her seat at the head of the table, on a throne somewhat higher than the golden chair for Cambyses[1], which stood by it. The king's lawful wives sat on his left hand; Nitetis next to him, then Atossa, and by her side the pale, plainly-dressed Phædime; next to this last wife of Cambyses sat Boges, the eunuch. Then came the high-priest Oropastes, some of the principal Magi, the satraps of various provinces (among them the Jew Belteshazzar), and a number of Persians, Medes and eunuchs, all holding high offices under the crown.

Bartja sat at the king's right hand, and after him

1. Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 5.

Crœsus, Hystaspes, Gobryas, Araspes, and others of the Achæmenidæ, according to their rank and age. Of the concubines, the greater number sat at the foot of the table; some stood opposite to Cambyses, and enlivened the banquet by songs and music. A number of eunuchs stood behind them, whose duty it was to see that they did not raise their eyes towards the men.[2]

Cambyses' first glance was bestowed on Nitetis; she sat by him in all the splendor and dignity of a queen, but looking very, very pale in her new purple robes.

Their eyes met, and Cambyses felt that such a look could only come from one who loved him very dearly. But his own love told him that something had troubled her. There was a sad seriousness about her mouth, and a slight cloud, which only he could see, seemed to veil the usually calm, clear and cheerful expression of her eyes. "I will ask her afterwards what has happened," thought he, "but it will not do to let my subjects see how much I love this girl."

He kissed his mother, sister, brother and his nearest relations on the forehead—said a short prayer thanking the gods for their mercies and entreating a happy new year for himself and the Persians—named the immense sum he intended to present to his countrymen on this day, and then called on the staff-bearers to bring the petitioners before his face, who hoped to obtain some reasonable request from the king on this day of grace.

As every petitioner had been obliged to lay his request before the principal staff-bearer the day before, in order to ascertain whether it was admissible, they all

2. Herod. IX. 110. 111. Book of Esther I. 10. 11. Brisson. *Regn. Persarum princip.* I. c. 103.

received satisfactory answers. The petitions of the women had been enquired into by the eunuchs in the same manner, and they too were now conducted before their lord and master by Boges, Kassandane alone remaining seated.

The long procession was opened by Nitetis and Atossa, and the two princesses were immediately followed by Phædime and another beauty. The latter was magnificently dressed and had been paired with Phædime by Boges, in order to make the almost poverty-stricken simplicity of the fallen favorite more apparent.

Intaphernes and Otanes looked as annoyed as Boges had expected, on seeing their grandchild and daughter so pale, and in such miserable array, in the midst of all this splendor and magnificence.

Cambyses had had experience of Phædime's former extravagance in matters of dress, and, when he saw her standing before him so plainly dressed and so pale, looked both angry and astonished. His brow darkened, and as she bent low before him, he asked her in an angry and tyrannical tone: "What is the meaning of this beggarly dress at my table, on the day set apart in my honor? Have you forgotten, that in our country it is the custom never to appear unadorned before the king? Verily, if it were not my birthday, and if I did not owe you some consideration as the daughter of our dearest kinsman, I should order the eunuchs to take you back to the harem, that you might have time to think over your conduct in solitude."

These words rendered the mortified woman's task much easier. She began to weep loud and bitterly, raising her hands and eyes to her angry lord in such a beseeching manner that his anger was changed into com-

passion, and he raised her from the ground with the question: "Have you a petition to ask of me?"

"What can I find to wish for, now that the sun of my life has withdrawn his light?" was her faltering answer, hindered by sobs.

Cambyses shrugged his shoulders, and asked again: "Is there nothing then that you wish for? I used to be able to dry your tears with presents; ask me for some golden comfort to-day."

"Phædime has nothing left to wish for now. For whom can she put on jewels when her king, her husband, withdraws the light of his countenance?"

"Then I can do nothing for you," exclaimed Cambyses, turning away angrily from the kneeling woman.

Boges had been quite right in advising Phædime to paint herself with white, for underneath the pale color her cheeks were burning with shame and anger. But, in spite of all, she controlled her passionate feelings, made the same deep obeisance to Nitetis as to the queen-mother, and allowed her tears to flow fast and freely in sight of all the Achæmenidæ.

Otanes and Intaphernes could scarcely suppress their indignation at seeing their daughter and grandchild thus humbled, and many an Achæmenide looked on, feeling deep sympathy with the unhappy Phædime and a hidden grudge against the favored, beautiful stranger.

The formalities were at last at an end and the feast began. Just before the king, in a golden basket, and gracefully bordered round with other fruits, lay a gigantic pomegranate, as large as a child's head.[3]

3. The Pishkesh or gift, which the Persians of the present day are in the habit of presenting to their guests, usually consists of sweets or baskets of fruit arranged in the most graceful manner. Brugsch, in

Cambyses noticed it now for the first time, examined its enormous size and rare beauty with the eye of a connoisseur, and said: "Who grew this wonderful pomegranate?"

"Thy servant Oropastes," answered the chief of the Magi, with a low obeisance. "For many years I have studied the art of gardening, and have ventured to lay this, the most beautiful fruit of my labors, at the feet of my king."[4]

"I owe you thanks," cried the king: "My friends, this pomegranate will assist me in the choice of a governor at home when we go out to war, for, by Mithras, the man who can cherish and foster a little tree so carefully will do greater things than these. What a splendid fruit! Surely it's like was never seen before. I thank you again, Oropastes, and as the thanks of a king must never consist of empty words alone, I name you at once vicegerent of my entire kingdom, in case of war. For we shall not dream away our time much longer in this idle rest, my friends. A Persian gets low-spirited without the joys of war."

A murmur of applause ran through the ranks of the Achæmenidæ and fresh shouts of "Victory to the king" resounded through the hall. Their anger on account of the humiliation of a woman was quickly forgotten; thoughts of coming battles, undying renown and conqueror's laurels to be won by deeds of arms, and recollections of their former mighty deeds raised the spirits of the revellers.

The king himself was more moderate than usual

his *Reise nach Persien* praises very highly the good taste, with which these baskets are arranged.

4. The story which follows in the text is told by Ælian. (*V. H.* I. 23.) of Artaxerxes and a certain Omises.

to-day, but he encouraged his guests to drink, enjoying their noisy merriment and overflowing mirth;—taking, however, far more pleasure still in the fascinating beauty of the Egyptian Princess, who sat at his side, paler than usual, and thoroughly exhausted by the exertions of the morning and the unaccustomed weight of the high tiara. He had never felt so happy as on this day. What indeed could he wish for more than he already possessed? Had not the gods given him every thing that a man could desire? and, over and above all this, had not they flung into his lap the precious gift of love? His usual inflexibility seemed to have changed into benevolence, and his stern severity into good-nature, as he turned to his brother Bartja with the words: "Come brother, have you forgotten my promise? Don't you know that to-day you are sure of gaining the dearest wish of your heart from me? That's right, drain the goblet, and take courage! but do not ask anything small, for I am in the mood to give largely to-day. Ah, it is a secret! come nearer then. I am really curious to know what the most fortunate youth in my entire kingdom can long for so much, that he blushes like a girl when his wish is spoken of."

Bartja, whose cheeks were really glowing from agitation, bent his head close to his brother's ear, and whispered shortly the story of his love. Sappho's father had helped to defend his native town Phocæa* against the hosts of Cyrus, and this fact the boy cleverly brought forward, speaking of the girl he loved as the daughter of a Greek warrior of noble birth. In so saying he spoke the truth, but at the same time he suppressed the

* See vol. I. note 22.

fact,[5] that this very father had acquired great riches by mercantile undertakings. He then told his brother how charming, cultivated and loving his Sappho was, and was just going to call on Crœsus for a confirmation of his words, when Cambyses interrupted him by kissing his forehead and saying: "You need say no more, brother; do what your heart bids you. I know the power of love too, and I will help you to gain our mother's consent."

Bartja threw himself at his brother's feet, overcome with gratitude and joy, but Cambyses raised him kindly and, looking especially at Nitetis and Kassandane, exclaimed: "Listen, my dear ones, the stem of Cyrus is going to blossom afresh, for our brother Bartja has resolved to put an end to his single life, so displeasing to the gods.[6] In a few days the young lover will leave us for your country, Nitetis, and will bring back another jewel from the shores of the Nile to our mountain home."

"What is the matter, sister?" cried Atossa, before her brother had finished speaking. Nitetis had fainted, and Atossa was sprinkling her forehead with wine as she lay in her arms.

"What was it?" asked the blind Kassandane, when Nitetis had awakened to consciousness a few moments later.

"The joy—the happiness—Tachot," faltered Nitetis.

Cambyses, as well as his sister, had sprung to the fainting girl's help. When she had recovered conscious-

5. The Persians were forbidden by law to contract debts, because debtors were necessarily led to say much that was untrue. Herod. I. 138. For this reason they held all money transactions in contempt, such occupations being also very uncongenial to their military tastes. They despised commerce and abandoned it to the conquered nations.

6. The Persians were commanded by their religion to marry, and the unmarried were held up to ridicule. *Vendid.* IV. Fargard. 130. The highest duty of man was to create and promote life, and to have many children was therefore considered praiseworthy. Herod. I. 136.

ness, he asked her to take some wine to revive her completely, gave her the cup with his own hand, and then went on at the point at which he had left off in his account: "Bartja is going to your own country, my wife—to Naukratis on the Nile—to fetch thence the granddaughter of a certain Rhodopis, and daughter of a noble warrior, a native of the brave town of Phocæa, as his wife."

"What was that?" cried the blind queen-mother.

"What is the matter with you?" exclaimed Atossa again, in an anxious, almost reproachful tone.

"Nitetis!" cried Crœsus admonishingly. But the warning came too late; the cup which her royal lover had given her slipped from her hands and fell ringing on the floor. All eyes were fixed on the king's features in anxious suspense. He had sprung from his seat pale as death; his lips trembled and his fist was clenched.

Nitetis looked up at her lover imploringly, but he was afraid of meeting those wonderful, fascinating eyes, and turned his head away, saying in a hoarse voice: "Take the women back to their apartments, Boges. I have seen enough of them—let us begin our drinking-bout—good-night, my mother; take care how you nourish vipers with your heart's blood. Sleep well, Egyptian, and pray to the gods to give you a more equal power of dissembling your feelings. To-morrow, my friends, we will go out hunting. Here, cup-bearer, give me some wine! fill the large goblet, but taste it well—yes, well—for to-day I am afraid of poison; to-day for the first time. Do you hear, Egyptian? I am afraid of poison! and every child knows—ah—ha—that all the poison, as well as the medicine[7] comes from Egypt."

7. The reputation of Egypt for medicines was known even to Homer. The number of different drugs mentioned in the inscriptions on the walls of the temple-laboratories, especially at Dendera and

Nitetis left the hall,—she hardly knew how,—more staggering than walking. Boges accompanied her, telling the bearers to make haste.

When they reached the hanging-gardens he gave her up to the care of the eunuch in attendance, and took his leave, not respectfully as usual, but chuckling, rubbing his hands, and speaking in an intimate and confidential tone: "Dream about the handsome Bartja and his Egyptian lady-love, my white Nile-kitten! Haven't you any message for the beautiful boy, whose love-story frightened you so terribly? Think a little. Poor Boges will very gladly play the go-between; the poor despised Boges wishes you so well—the humble Boges will be so sorry when he sees the proud palm-tree from Sais cut down. Boges is a prophet; he foretells you a speedy return home to Egypt, or a quiet bed in the black earth in Babylon, and the kind Boges wishes you a peaceful sleep. Farewell, my broken flower, my gay, bright viper, wounded by its own sting, my pretty fir-cone, fallen from the tall pine-tree!"

"How dare you speak in this impudent manner?" said the indignant princess.

"Thank you," answered the wretch, smiling.

"I shall complain of your conduct," threatened Nitetis.

"You are very amiable," answered Boges.

"Go out of my sight," she cried.

Edfoo, (published by Dümichen), and in the medical papyri, is surprising. *Odyssey* IV. 299. Pliny, XXV. 2. mentions the great number of useful herbs which flourished on the shores of the Nile. Neither were the Egyptian poisons less celebrated, especially the Strychnus. Plin. XXI. 15. The Halicacabon, called by Homer, (*Odyss.* 304), μῶλυ, was a very strong Egyptian poison. The number and variety of drugs mentioned in the Papyrus Ebers proves the great wealth of the Egyptian *materia medica.*

"I will obey your kind and gentle hints;" he answered softly, as if whispering words of love into her ear.

She started back in disgust and fear at these scornful words; she saw how full of terror they were for her, turned her back on him and went quickly into the house, but his voice rang after her: "Don't forget me, my lovely queen, think of me now and then; for everything that happens in the next few days will be a keepsake from the poor despised Boges."

As soon as she had disappeared he changed his tone, and commanded the sentries in the severest and most tyrannical manner, to keep a strict watch over the hanging-gardens. "Certain death," said he, "to whichever of you allows any one but myself to enter these gardens. No one, remember—no one—and least of all messengers from the queen-mother, Atossa or any of the great people, may venture to set foot on these steps. If Crœsus or Oropastes should wish to speak to the Egyptian Princess, refuse them decidedly. Do you understand? I repeat it, whoever is begged or bribed into disobedience will not see the light of to-morrow's sun. Nobody may enter these gardens without express permission from my own mouth. I think you know me. Here, take these gold staters, your work will be heavier now; but remember, I swear by Mithras not to spare one of you who is careless or disobedient."

The men made a due obeisance and determined to obey; they knew that Boges' threats were never meant in joke, and fancied something great must be coming to pass, as the stingy eunuch never spent his staters without good reason.

Boges was carried back to the banqueting-hall in the same litter, which had brought Nitetis away.

The king's wives had left, but the concubines were still standing in their appointed place, singing their monotonous songs, though quite unheard by the uproarious men.

The drinkers had already long forgotten the fainting woman. The uproar and confusion rose with every fresh wine-cup. They forgot the dignity of the place where they were assembled, and the presence of their mighty ruler.

They shouted in their drunken joy; warriors embraced one another with a tenderness only excited by wine, here and there a novice was carried away in the arms of a pair of sturdy attendants, while an old hand at the work would seize a wine-jug instead of a goblet, and drain it at a draught amid the cheers of the lookers-on.

The king sat on at the head of the table, pale as death, staring into the wine-cup as if unconscious of what was going on around him. But at the sight of his brother his fist clenched.

He would neither speak to him, nor answer his questions. The longer he sat there gazing into vacancy, the firmer became his conviction that Nitetis had deceived him,—that she had pretended to love him while her heart really belonged to Bartja. How shamefully they had made sport of him! How deeply rooted must have been the faithlessness of this clever hypocrite, if the mere news that his brother loved some one else could not only destroy all her powers of dissimulation, but actually deprive her of consciousness!

When Nitetis left the hall, Otanes, the father of Phædime had called out: "The Egyptian women seem to take great interest in the love-affairs of their brothers-in-law. The Persian women are not so generous with their feelings; they keep them for their husbands."

Cambyses was too proud to let it be seen that he had heard these words; like the ostrich, he feigned deafness and blindness in order not to seem aware of the looks and murmurs of his guests, which all went to prove that he had been deceived.

Bartja could have had no share in her perfidy; she had loved this handsome youth, and perhaps all the more because she had not been able to hope for a return of her love. If he had had the slightest suspicion of his brother, he would have killed him on the spot. Bartja was certainly innocent of any share in the deception and in his brother's misery, but still he was the cause of all; so the old grudge, which had only just been allowed to slumber, woke again; and, as a relapse is always more dangerous than the original illness, the newly-roused anger was more violent than what he had formerly felt.

He thought and thought, but he could not devise a fitting punishment for this false woman. Her death would not content his vengeance, she must suffer something worse than mere death!

Should he send her back to Egypt, disgraced and shamed? Oh, no! she loved her country, and she would be received by her parents with open arms. Should he, after she had confessed her guilt, (for he was determined to force a confession from her) shut her up in a solitary dungeon? or should he deliver her over to Boges, to be the servant of his concubines? Yes! now he had hit upon the right punishment. Thus the faithless creature should be disciplined, and the hypocrite, who had dared to make sport of him—the All-powerful—forced to atone for her crimes.

Then he said to himself: "Bartja must not stay here; fire and water have more in common than we two—he

always fortunate and happy, and I so miserable. Some day or other his descendants will divide my treasures, and wear my crown; but as yet I am king, and I will show that I am."

The thought of his proud, powerful position flashed through him like lightning. He woke from his dreams into new life, flung his golden goblet far into the hall, so that the wine flew round like rain, and cried: "We have had enough of this idle talk and useless noise. Let us hold a council of war, drunken as we are,[8] and consider what answer we ought to give the Massagetæ. Hystaspes, you are the eldest, give us your opinion first."

Hystaspes, the father of Darius, was an old man. He answered: "It seems to me, that the messengers of this wandering tribe have left us no choice. We cannot go to war against desert wastes; but as our host is already under arms and our swords have lain long in their scabbards, war we must have. We only want a few good enemies, and I know no easier work than to make them."

At these words the Persians broke into loud shouts of delight; but Crœsus only waited till the noise had ceased to say: "Hystaspes, you and I are both old men; but you are a thorough Persian and fancy you can only be happy in battle and bloodshed. You are now obliged to lean for support on the staff, which used to be the badge of your rank as commander, and yet you speak like a hot-blooded boy. I agree with you that enemies are easy enough to find, but only fools go out to look for them. The man who tries to make enemies is like

8. Herod. I. 134. The Persians deliberated and resolved when they were intoxicated, and when they were sober reconsidered their determinations. Tacitus tells the same of the old Germans. *Germ.* c. 22.

a wretch who mutilates his own body. If the enemies are there, let us go out to meet them like wise men who wish to look misfortune boldly in the face; but let us never try to begin an unjust war, hateful to the gods. We will wait until wrong has been done us, and then go to victory or death, conscious that we have right on our side."

The old man was interrupted by a low murmur of applause, drowned however quickly by cries of "Hystaspes is right! let us look for an enemy!"

It was now the turn of the envoy Prexaspes to speak, and he answered laughing: "Let us follow the advice of both these noble old men. We will do as Crœsus bids us and not go out to seek an enemy, but at the same time we will follow Hystaspes' advice by raising our claims and pronouncing every one our enemy, who does not cheerfully consent to become a member of the kingdom founded by our great father Cyrus. For instance, we will ask the Indians if they would feel proud to obey your sceptre, Cambyses. If they answer no, it is a sign that they do not love us, and whoever does not love us, must be our enemy."

"That won't do," cried Zopyrus. "We must have war at any price."

"I vote for Crœsus," said Gobryas.

"And I too," said the noble Artabazus.

"We are for Hystaspes," shouted the warrior Araspes, the old Intaphernes, and some more of Cyrus's old companions-in-arms.

"War we must have at any price," roared the general Megabyzus, the father of Zopyrus, striking the table so sharply with his heavy fist, that the golden vessels rang again, and some goblets even fell; "but not with the Massagetæ—not with a flying foe."

"There must be no war with the Massagetæ," said the high-priest Oropastes. "The gods themselves have avenged Cyrus's death upon them."

Cambyses sat for some moments, quietly and coldly watching the unrestrained enthusiasm of his warriors, and then, rising from his seat, thundered out the words: "Silence, and listen to your king!"

The words worked like magic on this multitude of drunken men. Even those who were most under the influence of wine, listened to their king in a kind of unconscious obedience. He lowered his voice and went on: "I did not ask whether you wished for peace or war—I know that every Persian prefers the labor of war to an inglorious idleness—but I wished to know what answer you would give the Massagetan warriors. Do you consider that the soul of my father—of the man to whom you owe all your greatness—has been sufficiently avenged?"

A dull murmur in the affirmative, interrupted by some violent voices in the negative, was the answer. The king then asked a second question: "Shall we accept the conditions proposed by their envoys, and grant peace to this nation, already so scourged and desolated by the gods?" To this they all agreed eagerly.

"That is what I wished to know," continued Cambyses. "To-morrow, when we are sober, we will follow the old custom and reconsider what has been resolved on during our intoxication. Drink on, all of you, as long as the night lasts. To-morrow, at the last crow of the sacred bird Parodar,[9] I shall expect you to meet me for the chase, at the gate of the temple of Bel."

9. The cock was held sacred by the Persians, because it scared the dark Divs of night back into their dens. Jasht, *Avân*, 21. It was

So saying, the king left the hall, followed by a thundering "Victory to the king!" Boges had slipped out quietly before him. In the forecourt he found one of the gardener's boys from the hanging-gardens.

"What do you want here?" asked Boges.

"I have something for the prince Bartja."

"For Bartja? Has he asked your master to send him some seeds or slips?"

The boy shook his sunburnt head and smiled roguishly.

"Some one else sent you then?" said Boges becoming more attentive.

"Yes, some one else."

"Ah! the Egyptian has sent a message to her brother-in-law?"

"Who told you that?"

"Nitesis spoke to me about it. Here, give me what you have; I will give it to Bartja at once."

"I was not to give it to any one but the prince himself."

"Give it to me; it will be safer in my hands than in yours."

"I dare not."

"Obey me at once, or—"

At this moment the king came up. Boges thought a moment, and then called in a loud voice to the whip-bearers on duty at the palace-gate, to take the astonished boy up.

"What is the matter here?" asked Cambyses.

"This fellow," answered the eunuch, "has had the

called Parôdar (Parôdarsh) and also Kahrkatâç (he who raises and lowers his comb?). Vendid. XVIII. 34.

audacity to make his way into the palace with a message from your consort Nitetis to Bartja."

At sight of the king, the boy had fallen on his knees, touching the ground with his forehead.

Cambyses looked at him and turned deadly pale. Then, turning to the eunuch, he asked: "What does the Egyptian Princess wish from my brother?"

"The boy declares that he has orders to give up what has been entrusted to him to no one but Bartja."

On hearing this the boy looked imploringly up at the king, and held out a little papyrus roll.

Cambyses snatched it out of his hand, but the next moment stamped furiously on the ground at seeing that the letter was written in Greek, which he could not read.

He collected himself, however, and, with an awful look, asked the boy who had given him the letter.

"The Egyptian lady's waiting-woman Mandane," he answered; "the Magian's daughter."

"For my brother Bartja?"

"She said I was to give the letter to the handsome prince, before the banquet, with a greeting from her mistress Nitetis, and I was to tell him . . ."

Here the king stamped so furiously, that the boy was frightened and could only stammer: "Before the banquet the prince was walking with you, so I could not speak to him, and now I am waiting for him here, for Mandane promised to give me a piece of gold if I did what she told me cleverly."

"And that you have not done," thundered the king, fancying himself shamefully deceived. "No, indeed you have not. Here, guards, seize this fellow!"

The boy begged and prayed, but all in vain; the

whip-bearers seized him quick as thought, and Cambyses, who went off at once to his own apartments, was soon out of reach of his whining entreaties for mercy.

Boges followed his master, rubbing his fat hands, and laughing quietly to himself.

The king's attendants began their work of disrobing him, but he told them angrily to leave him at once.

As soon as they were gone, he called Boges and said in a low voice: "From this time forward the hanging-gardens and the Egyptian are under your control. Watch her carefully! If a single human being or a message reaches her without my knowledge, your life will be the forfeit."

"But if Kassandane or Atossa should send to her?"

"Turn the messengers away, and send word that every attempt to see or communicate with Nitetis will be regarded by me as a personal offence."

"May I ask a favor for myself, O King?"

"The time is not well chosen for asking favors."

"I feel ill. Permit some one else to take charge of the hanging-gardens for to-morrow only."

"No!—now leave me."

"I am in a burning fever and have lost consciousness three times during the day—if when I am in that state any one should . . ."

"But who could take your place?"

"The Lydian captain of the eunuchs, Kandaules. He is true as gold, and inflexibly severe. One day of rest would restore me to health. Have mercy, O King!"

"No one is so badly served as the king himself. Kandaules may take your place to-morrow, but give him the strictest orders, and say that the slightest neglect will put his life in danger.—Now depart."

"Yet one word, my King: to-morrow night the rare blue lily in the hanging-gardens will open. Hystaspes, Intaphernes, Gobyras, Crœsus and Oropastes, the greatest horticulturists at your court, would very much like to see it. May they be allowed to visit the gardens for a few minutes? Kandaules shall see that they enter into no communication with the Egyptian."

"Kandaules must keep his eyes open, if he cares for his own life.—Go!"

Boges made a deep obeisance and left the king's apartment. He threw a few gold pieces to the slaves who bore the torches before him. He was so very happy. Every thing had succeeded beyond his expectations:—the fate of Nitetis was as good as decided, and he held the life of Kandaules, his hated colleague, in his own hands.

Cambyses spent the night in pacing up and down his apartment. By cock-crow he had decided that Nitetis should be forced to confess her guilt, and then be sent into the great harem to wait on the concubines. Bartja, the destroyer of his happiness, should set off at once for Egypt, and on his return become the satrap of some distant provinces. He did not wish to incur the guilt of a brother's murder, but he knew his own temper too well not to fear that in a moment of sudden anger, he might kill one he hated so much, and therefore wished to remove him out of the reach of his passion.

Two hours after the sun had risen, Cambyses was riding on his fiery steed, far in front of a countless train of followers armed with shields, swords, lances, bows and lassos, in pursuit of the game which was to be found in the immense preserves near Babylon, and was to

be started from its lair by more than a thousand dogs.[10]

CHAPTER II.

THE hunt was over. Waggons full of game, amongst which were several enormous wild boars killed by the king's own hand, were driven home behind the sportsmen. At the palace-gates the latter dispersed to their several abodes, in order to exchange the simple Persian leather hunting-costume for the splendid Median court-dress.

In the course of the day's sport Cambyses had (with difficulty restraining his agitation) given his brother the seemingly kind order to start the next day for Egypt

10. The same immense trains of followers of course accompanied the kings on their hunting expeditions, as on their journeys. As the Persian nobility were very fond of hunting, their boys were taught this sport at an early age. According to Strabo, kings themselves boasted of having been mighty hunters in the inscriptions on their tombs. A relief has been found in the ruins of Persepolis, on which the king is strangling a lion with his right arm, but this is supposed to have a historical, not a symbolical meaning. Similar representations occur on Assyrian monuments. Izdubar strangling a lion and fighting with a lion (relief at Khorsabad) is admirably copied in Delitzsch's edition of G. Smith's Chaldean Genesis. Texier, *Description de l'Arménie* pl. 98. Layard discovered some representations of hunting-scenes during his excavations; as, for instance, stags and wild boars among the reeds; and the Greeks often mention the immense troops of followers on horse and foot who attended the kings of Persia when they went hunting. According to Xenophon, *Cyrop.* I. 2. II. 4. every hunter was obliged to be armed with a bow and arrows, two lances, sword and shield. In Firdusi's Book of Kings we read that the lasso was also a favorite weapon. Hawking was well known to the Persians more than 900 years ago. Book of Kabus XVIII. p. 495. The boomerang was used in catching birds as well by the Persians as by the ancient Egyptians and the present savage tribes of New Holland. Brugsch tells us that the present Shah of Persia, Nasr-ed-din, is a bold sportsman and passionately fond of hunting.

in order to fetch Sappho and accompany her to Persia. At the same time he assigned him the revenues of Bactra, Rhagæ and Sinope for the maintenance of his new household, and to his young wife, all the duties levied from her native town Phocæa, as pin-money.

Bartja thanked his generous brother with undisguised warmth, but Cambyses remained cold as ice, uttered a few farewell words, and then, riding off in pursuit of a wild ass, turned his back upon him.

On the way home from the chase the prince invited his bosom-friends* Crœsus, Darius, Zopyrus and Gyges to drink a parting-cup with him.

Crœsus promised to join them later, as he had promised to visit the blue lily at the rising of the Tistar-star.

He had been to the hanging-gardens that morning early to visit Nitetis, but had been refused entrance by the guards, and the blue lily seemed now to offer him another chance of seeing and speaking to his beloved pupil. He wished for this very much, as he could not thoroughly understand her behavior the day before, and was uneasy at the strict watch set over her.

The young Achæmenidæ sat cheerfully talking together in the twilight in a shady bower in the royal gardens, cool fountains plashing round them. Araspes, a Persian of high rank, who had been one of Cyrus's friends, had joined them, and did full justice to the prince's excellent wine.

"Fortunate Bartja!" cried the old bachelor, "going out to a golden country to fetch the woman you love; while I, miserable old fellow, am blamed by every-

* See vol. I. note 193.

body,* and totter to my grave without wife or children to weep for me and pray the gods to be merciful to my poor soul."

"Why think of such things?" cried Zopyrus, flourishing the wine-cup. "There's no woman so perfect that her husband does not, at least once a day, repent that he ever took a wife. Be merry, old friend, and remember that it's all your own fault. If you thought a wife would make you happy, why did not you do as I have done? I am only twenty-two years old and have five stately wives and a troop of the most beautiful slaves in my house."

Araspes smiled bitterly.

"And what hinders you from marrying now?" said Gyges. "You are a match for many a younger man in appearance, strength, courage and perseverance. You are one of the king's nearest relations too—I tell you, Araspes, you might have twenty young and beautiful wives."

"Look after your own affairs," answered Araspes. "In your place, I certainly should not have waited to marry till I was thirty."

"An oracle has forbidden my marrying."

"Folly? how can a sensible man care for what an oracle says? It is only by dreams, that the gods announce the future to men. I should have thought that your own father was example enough of the shameful way in which those lying priests deceive their best friends."

"That is a matter which you do not understand, Araspes."

"And never wish to, boy, for you only believe in

* See note 6

oracles because you don't understand them, and in your short-sightedness call everything that is beyond your comprehension a miracle. And you place more confidence in anything that seems to you miraculous, than in the plain simple truth that lies before your face. An oracle deceived your father and plunged him into ruin, but the oracle is miraculous, and so you too, in perfect confidence, allow it to rob you of happiness!"

"That is blasphemy, Araspes. Are the gods to be blamed because we misunderstand their words?"

"Certainly: for if they wished to benefit us they would give us, with the words, the necessary penetration for discovering their meaning. What good does a beautiful speech do me, if it is in a foreign language that I do not understand?"

"Leave off this useless discussion," said Darius, "and tell us instead, Araspes, how it is that, though you congratulate every man on becoming a bridegroom, you yourself have so long submitted to be blamed by the priests, slighted at all entertainments and festivals, and abused by the women, only because you choose to live and die a bachelor?"

Araspes looked down thoughtfully, then shook himself, took a long draught from the wine-cup, and said, "I have my reasons, friends, but I cannot tell them now."

"Tell them, tell them," was the answer.

"No, children, I cannot, indeed I cannot. This cup I drain to the health of the charming Sappho, and this second to your good fortune, my favorite, Darius."

"Thanks, Araspes!" exclaimed Bartja, joyfully raising his goblet to his lips.

"You mean well, I know," muttered Darius, looking down gloomily.

"What's this, you son of Hystaspes?" cried the old man, looking more narrowly at the serious face of the youth. "Dark looks like these don't sit well on a betrothed lover, who is to drink to the health of his dearest one. Is not Gobryas' little daughter the noblest of all the young Persian girls after Atossa? and isn't she beautiful?"

"Artystone has every talent and quality that a daughter of the Achæmenidæ ought to possess," was Darius's answer, but his brow did not clear as he said the words.

"Well, if you want more than that, you must be very hard to please."

Darius raised his goblet and looked down into the wine.

"The boy is in love, as sure as my name is Araspes!" exclaimed the elder man.

"What a set of foolish fellows you are," broke in Zopyrus at this exclamation. "One of you has remained a bachelor in defiance of all Persian customs; another has been frightened out of marrying by an oracle; Bartja has determined to be content with only one wife; and Darius looks like a Destur chanting the funeral-service, because his father has told him to make himself happy with the most beautiful and aristocratic girl in Persia!"

"Zopyrus is right," cried Araspes. "Darius is ungrateful to fortune."

Bartja meanwhile kept his eyes fixed on the friend, who was thus blamed by the others. He saw that their jests annoyed him, and feeling his own great hap-

piness doubly in that moment, pressed Darius's hand, saying: "I am so sorry that I cannot be present at your wedding. By the time I come back, I hope you will be reconciled to your father's choice."

"Perhaps," said Darius, "I may be able to show a second and even a third wife by that time."

"Anahita* grant it!" exclaimed Zopyrus. "The Achæmenidæ would soon become extinct, if every one were to follow such examples as Gyges and Araspes have set us. And your one wife, Bartja, is really not worth talking about. It is your duty to marry three wives at once, in order to keep up your father's family—the race of Cyrus."

"I hate our custom of marrying many wives," answered Bartja. "Through doing this, we make ourselves inferior to the women, for we expect them to remain faithful to us all our lives, and we, who are bound to respect truth and faithfulness above every thing else, swear inviolable love to one woman to-day, and to another to-morrow."

"Nonsense!" cried Zopyrus. "I'd rather lose my tongue than tell a lie to a man, but our wives are so awfully deceitful, that one has no choice but to pay them back in their own coin."

"The Greek women are different," said Bartja, "because they are differently treated. Sappho told me of one, I think her name was Penelope, who waited twenty years faithfully and lovingly for her husband, though every one believed he was dead, and she had fifty lovers a day at her house."

"My wives would not wait so long for me," said Zopyrus laughing. "To tell the truth, I don't think I

* See vol. I. note 253.

should be sorry to find an empty house, if I came back after twenty years. For then I could take some new wives into my harem, young and beautiful, instead of the unfaithful ones, who, besides, would have grown old. But alas! every woman does not find some one to run away with her, and our women would rather have an absent husband than none at all."

"If your wives could hear what you are saying!" said Araspes.

"They would declare war with me at once, or, what is still worse, conclude a peace with one another."

"How would that be worse?"

"How? it is easy to see, that you have had no experience."

"Then let us into the secrets of your married life."

"With pleasure. You can easily fancy, that five wives in one house do not live quite so peacefully as five doves in a cage; mine at least carry on an uninterrupted, mortal warfare. But I have accustomed myself to that, and their sprightliness even amuses me. A year ago, however, they came to terms with one another, and this day of peace was the most miserable in my life."

"You are jesting."

"No, indeed, I am quite in earnest. The wretched eunuch who had to keep watch over the five, allowed them to see an old jewel-merchant from Tyre. Each of them chose a separate and expensive set of jewels. When I came home Sudabe came up and begged for money to pay for these ornaments. The things were too dear, and I refused. Every one of the five then came and begged me separately for the money; I refused each of them point blank and went off to court. When I

came back, there were all my wives weeping side by side, embracing one another and calling each other fellow-sufferers. These former enemies rose up against me with the most touching unanimity, and so overwhelmed me with revilings and threats that I left the room. They closed their doors against me. The next morning the lamentations of the evening before were continued. I fled once more and went hunting with the king, and when I came back, tired, hungry and half-frozen—for it was in spring, we were already at Ecbatana, and the snow was lying an ell deep on the Orontes—there was no fire on the hearth and nothing to eat. These noble creatures had entered into an alliance in order to punish me, had put out the fire, forbidden the cooks to do their duty and, which was worse than all—had kept the jewels! No sooner had I ordered the slaves to make a fire and prepare food, than the impudent jewel-dealer appeared and demanded his money. I refused again, passed another solitary night, and in the morning sacrificed ten talents for the sake of peace. Since that time harmony and peace among my beloved wives seems to me as much to be feared as the evil Divs themselves, and I see their little quarrels with the greatest pleasure."

"Poor Zopyrus!" cried Bartja.

"Why poor?" asked this five-fold husband. "I tell you I am much happier than you are. My wives are young and charming, and when they grow old, what is to hinder me from taking others, still handsomer, and who, by the side of the faded beauties, will be doubly charming. Ho! slave—bring some lamps. The sun has gone down, and the wine loses all its flavor when the table is not brightly lighted."

At this moment the voice of Darius, who had left the

arbor and gone out into the garden, was heard calling: "Come and hear how beautifully the nightingale is singing."

"By Mithras, you son of Hystaspes, you must be in love," interrupted Araspes. "The flowery darts of love[11] *must* have entered the heart of him, who leaves his wine to listen to the nightingale."

"You are right there, father," cried Bartja. "Philomel, as the Greeks call our Gulgul, is the lovers' bird among all nations, for love has given her her beautiful song. What beauty were you dreaming of, Darius, when you went out to listen to the nightingale?"

"I was not dreaming of any," answered he. "You know how fond I am of watching the stars, and the Tistar-star rose so splendidly to-night, that I left the wine to watch it. The nightingales were singing so loudly to one another, that if I had not wished to hear them I must have stopped my ears."

"You kept them wide open, however," said Araspes laughing. "Your enraptured exclamation proved that."

"Enough of this," cried Darius, to whom these jokes were getting wearisome. "I really must beg you to leave off making allusions to matters, which I do not care to hear spoken of."

"Imprudent fellow!" whispered the older man; "now you really have betrayed yourself. If you were not in love, you would have laughed instead of getting angry.

11. We have borrowed this idea from the Indians, the arrows of whose love-god Kama were made of sharpened flower-blossoms. The nightingale "gulgul" plays a great part in the Persian love-songs. Her song is spoken of as the perfection of sweet sound, and she herself as the lovers' bird. See J. von Hammer's *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens*.

Still I won't go on provoking you—tell me what you have just been reading in the stars."

At these words Darius looked up again into the starry sky and fixed his eyes on a bright constellation hanging over the horizon. Zopyrus watched him and called out to his friends, "Something important must be happening up there. Darius, tell us what's going on in the heavens just now."

"Nothing good," answered the other. "Bartja, I have something to say to you alone."

"Why to me alone? Araspes always keeps his own counsel, and from the rest of you I never have any secrets."

"Still—"

"Speak out."

"No, I wish you would come into the garden with me."

Bartja nodded to the others, who were still sitting over their wine, laid his hand on Darius' shoulder and went out with him into the bright moonlight. As soon as they were alone, Darius seized both his friend's hands, and said: "To-day is the third time that things have happened in the heavens, which bode no good for you. Your evil star has approached your favorable constellation so nearly, that a mere novice in astrology could see some serious danger was at hand. Be on your guard, Bartja, and start for Egypt to-day; the stars tell me that the danger is here on the Euphrates, not abroad."

"Do you believe implicitly in the stars?"

"Implicitly. They never lie."

"Then it would be folly to try and avoid what they have foretold."

"Yes, no man can run away from his destiny; but

that very destiny is like a fencing-master—his favorite pupils are those who have the courage and skill to parry his own blows. Start for Egypt to-day, Bartja."

"I cannot—I haven't taken leave of my mother and Atossa."

"Send them a farewell message, and tell Crœsus to explain the reason of your starting so quickly."

"They would call me a coward."

"It is cowardly to yield to any mortal, but to go out of the way of one's fate is wisdom."

"You contradict yourself, Darius. What would the fencing-master say to a runaway-pupil?"

"He would rejoice in the stratagem, by which an isolated individual tried to escape a superior force."

"But the superior force must conquer at last.—What would be the use of my trying to put off a danger which, you say yourself, cannot be averted? If my tooth aches, I have it drawn at once, instead of tormenting and making myself miserable for weeks by putting off the painful operation as a coward or a woman would, till the last moment. I can await this coming danger bravely, and the sooner it comes the better, for then I shall have it behind me."

"You do not know how serious it is."

"Are you afraid for my life?"

"No."

"Then tell me, what you are afraid of."

"That Egyptian priest with whom I used to study the stars, once cast your horoscope with me. He knew more about the heavens, than any man I ever saw. I learnt a great deal from him, and I will not hide from you that even then he drew my attention to dangers that threaten you now."

"And you did not tell me?"

"Why should I have made you uneasy beforehand? Now that your destiny is drawing near, I warn you."

"Thank you,—I will be careful. In former times I should not have listened to such a warning, but now that I love Sappho, I feel as if my life were not so much my own to do what I like with, as it used to be."

"I understand this feeling . . ."

"You understand it? Then Araspes was right? You don't deny?"

"A mere dream without any hope of fulfilment."

"But what woman could refuse you?"

"Refuse!"

"I don't understand you. Do you mean to say that you—the boldest sportsman, the strongest wrestler—the wisest of all the young Persians—that you, Darius, are afraid of a woman?"

"Bartja, may I tell you more, than I would tell even to my own father?"

"Yes."

"I love the daughter of Cyrus, your sister and the king's,—Atossa."

"Have I understood you rightly? you love Atossa? Be praised for this, O ye pure Amescha çpenta!* Now I shall never believe in your stars again, for instead of the danger with which they threatened me, here comes an unexpected happiness. Embrace me, my brother, and tell me the whole story, that I may see whether I can help you to turn this hopeless dream, as you call it, into a reality."

"You will remember that before our journey to Egypt, we went with the entire court from Ecbatana to Susa. I

* See note 17.

was in command of the division of the "Immortals" appointed to escort the carriages containing the king's mother and sister, and his wives. In going through the narrow pass which leads over the Orontes, the horses of your mother's carriage slipped. The yoke to which the horses were harnessed[12] broke from the pole, and the heavy, four-wheeled carriage fell over the precipice without obstruction. On seeing it disappear, we were horrified and spurred our horses to the place as quickly as possible. We expected of course to see only fragments of the carriages and the dead bodies of its inmates, but the gods had taken them into their almighty protection, and there lay the carriage, with broken wheels, in the arms of two gigantic cypresses which had taken firm root in the fissures of the slate rocks, and whose dark tops reached up to the edge of the carriage-road.

"As quick as thought I sprang from my horse and scrambled down one of the cypresses. Your mother and sister stretched their arms to me, crying for help. The danger was frightful, for the sides of the carriage had been so shattered by the fall, that they threatened every moment to give way, in which case those inside it must inevitably have fallen into the black, unfathomable abyss which looked like an abode for the gloomy Divs, and stretched his jaws wide to crush its beautiful victims.

"I stood before the shattered carriage as it hung over the precipice ready to fall to pieces every moment, and then for the first time I met your sister's imploring

12. There was a yoke at the end of the shaft of a Persian carriage, which was fastened on to the backs of the horses and took the place of our horse-collar and pole-chain. See illustration in Gosse's *Assyria*, *p.* 224. Layard, p. 151 and 447-451. The Egyptian horses were harnessed in the same manner. See Vol. I. note 30. The horses represented on the Persian and Assyrian monuments are without question a different race from those on the Egyptian.

look. From that moment I loved her, but at the time I was much too intent on saving them, to think of anything else, and had no idea what had taken place within me. I dragged the trembling women out of the carriage, and one minute later it rolled down the abyss crashing into a thousand pieces. I am a strong man, but I confess that all my strength was required to keep myself and the two women from falling over the precipice until ropes were thrown to us from above. Atossa hung round my neck, and Kassandane lay on my breast, supported by my left arm; with the right I fastened the rope round my waist, we were drawn up, and I found myself a few minutes later on the high-road—your mother and sister were saved.

"As soon as one of the Magi had bound up the wounds cut by the rope in my side, the king sent for me, gave me the chain I am now wearing and the revenues of an entire satrapy, and then took me to his mother and sister. They expressed their gratitude very warmly; Kassandane allowed me to kiss her forehead, and gave me all the jewels she had worn at the time of the accident, as a present for my future wife. Atossa took a ring from her finger, put it on mine and kissed my hand in the warmth of her emotion—you know how eager and excitable she is. Since that happy day—the happiest in my life—I have never seen your sister, till yesterday evening, when we sat opposite to each other at the banquet. Our eyes met. I saw nothing but Atossa, and I think she has not forgotten the man who saved her. Kassandane . . ."

"Oh, my mother would be delighted to have you for a son-in-law; I will answer for that. As to the king, your father must apply to him; he is our uncle

and has a right to ask the hand of Cyrus's daughter for his son."

"But have you forgotten your father's dream? You know that Cambyses has always looked on me with suspicion since that time."

"Oh, that has been long forgotten. My father dreamt before his death that you had wings,[13] and was misled by the soothsayers into the fancy that you, though you were only eighteen then, would try to gain the crown. Cambyses thought of this dream too; but, when you saved my mother and sister, Crœsus explained to him that this must have been its fulfilment, as no one but Darius or a winged eagle could possibly have possessed strength and dexterity enough to hang suspended over such an abyss."

"Yes, and I remember too that these words did not please your brother. He chooses to be the only eagle in Persia; but Crœsus does not spare his vanity—"

"Where can Crœsus be all this time?"

"In the hanging-gardens. My father and Gobryas have very likely detained him."

Just at that moment the voice of Zopyrus was heard exclaiming, "Well, I call that polite! Bartja invites us to a wine-party and leaves us sitting here without a host, while he talks secrets yonder."

"We are coming, we are coming," answered Bartja. Then taking the hand of Darius heartily, he said: "I am very glad that you love Atossa. I shall stay here till the day after to-morrow, let the stars threaten me with all the dangers in the world. To-morrow I will find out what Atossa feels, and when every thing is in

13. Herod. I. 209.

the right track I shall go away, and leave my winged Darius to his own powers."

So saying Bartja went back into the arbor, and his friend began to watch the stars again. The longer he looked the sadder and more serious became his face, and when the Tistar-star set, he murmured, "Poor Bartja!" His friends called him, and he was on the point of returning to them, when he caught sight of a new star, and began to examine its position carefully. His serious looks gave way to a triumphant smile, his tall figure seemed to grow taller still, he pressed his hand on his heart and whispered: "Use your pinions, winged Darius; your star will be on your side," and then returned to his friends.

A few minutes after, Crœsus came up to the arbor. The youths sprang from their seats to welcome the old man, but when he saw Bartja's face by the bright moonlight, he stood as if transfixed by a flash of lightning.

"What has happened, father?" asked Gyges, seizing his hand anxiously.

"Nothing, nothing," he stammered almost inaudibly, and pushing his son on one side, whispered in Bartja's ear: "Unhappy boy, you are still here? don't delay any longer,—fly at once! the whip-bearers are close at my heels, and I assure you that if you don't use the greatest speed, you will have to forfeit your double imprudence with your life."

"But Crœsus, I have . . ."

"You have set at nought the law of the land and of the court, and, in appearance at least, have done great offence to your brother's honor . . ."

"You are speaking . . ."

"Fly, I tell you—fly at once; for if your visit to the hanging-gardens was ever so innocently meant, you are still in the greatest danger. You know Cambyses' violent temper so well; how could you so wickedly disobey his express command?"

"I don't understand."

"No excuses,—fly! don't you know that, Cambyses has long been jealous of you, and that your visit to the Egyptian to-night . . ."

"I have never once set foot in the hanging-gardens, since Nitetis has been here."

"Don't add a lie to your offence, I . . ."

"But I swear to you . . ."

"Do you wish to turn a thoughtless act into a crime by adding the guilt of perjury? The whip-bearers are coming, fly!"

"I shall remain here, and abide by my oath."

"You are infatuated! It is not an hour ago since I myself, Hystaspes, and others of the Achæmenidæ, saw you in the hanging-gardens . . ."

In his astonishment Bartja had, half involuntarily, allowed himself to be led away, but when he heard this he stood still, called his friends and said "Crœsus says he met me an hour ago in the hanging-gardens, you know that since the sun set I have not been away from you. Give your testimony, that in this case an evil Div must have made sport of our friend and his companions."

"I swear to you, father," cried Gyges, "that Bartja has not left this garden for some hours."

"And we confirm the same," added Araspes, Zopyrus and Darius with one voice.

"You want to deceive me?" said Crœsus getting

very angry, and looking at each of them reproachfully. "Do you fancy that I am blind or mad? Do you think that your witness will outweigh the words of such men as Hystaspes, Gobryas, Artaphernes and the high-priest, Oropastes? In spite of all your false testimony, which no amount of friendship can justify, Bartja will have to die unless he flies at once."

"May Angramainjus destroy me," said Araspes interrupting the old man, "if Bartja was in the hanging-gardens two hours ago!" and Gyges added:

"Dont call me your son any longer, if we have given false testimony."

Darius was beginning to appeal to the eternal stars, but Bartja put an end to this confusion of voices by saying in a decided tone: "A division of the body-guard is coming into the garden. I am to be arrested; I cannot escape because I am innocent, and to fly would lay me open to suspicion. By the soul of my father, the blind eyes of my mother, and the pure light of the sun, Crœsus, I swear that I am not lying."

"Am I to believe you, in spite of my own eyes which have never yet deceived me? But I will, boy, for I love you. I do not and I will not know whether you are innocent or guilty, but this I do know, you must fly, and fly at once. You know Cambyses. My carriage is waiting at the gate. Don't spare the horses, save yourself even if you drive them to death. The soldiers seem to know what they have been sent to do; there can be no question that they delay so long only in order to give their favorite time to escape. Fly, fly, or it is all over with you."

Darius, too, pushed his friend forward, exclaiming:

"Fly, Bartja, and remember the warning that the heavens themselves wrote in the stars for you."

Bartja, however, stood silent, shook his handsome head, waved his friends back, and answered: "I never ran away yet, and I mean to hold my ground to-day. Cowardice is worse than death in my opinion, and I would rather suffer wrong at the hands of others than disgrace myself. There are the soldiers! Well met, Bischen. You've come to arrest me, haven't you? Wait one moment, till I have said good-bye to my friends."

Bischen, the officer he spoke to, was one of Cyrus's old captains; he had given Bartja his first lessons in shooting and throwing the spear, had fought by his side in the war with the Tapuri, and loved him as if he were his own son. He interrupted him, saying: "There is no need to take leave of your friends, for the king, who is raging like a madman, ordered me not only to arrest you, but every one else who might be with you."

And then he added in a low voice: "The king is beside himself with rage and threatens to have your life. You must fly. My men will do what I tell them blindfold; they will not pursue you; and I am so old that it would be little loss to Persia, if my head were the price of my disobedience."

"Thanks, thanks, my friend," said Bartja, giving him his hand; "but I cannot accept your offer, because I am innocent, and I know that though Cambyses is hasty, he is not unjust. Come friends, I think the king will give us a hearing to-day, late as it is."

CHAPTER III.

Two hours later Bartja and his friends were standing before the king. The gigantic man was seated on his golden throne; he was pale and his eyes looked sunken; two physicians stood waiting behind him with all kinds of instruments and vessels in their hands. Cambyses had, only a few minutes before, recovered consciousness, after lying for more than an hour in one of those awful fits, so destructive both to mind and body, which we call epileptic.

Since Nitetis' arrival he had been free from this illness; but it had seized him to-day with fearful violence, owing to the overpowering mental excitement he had gone through.[14]

If he had met Bartja a few hours before, he would have killed him with his own hand; but though the epileptic fit had not subdued his anger it had at least so far quieted it, that he was in a condition to hear what was to be said on both sides.

At the right hand of the throne stood Hystaspes, Darius's grey-haired father, Gobryas, his future father-in-law, the aged Intaphernes, the grandfather of that Phædime whose place in the king's favor had been given to Nitetis, Oropastes the high-priest, Crœsus, and behind them Boges, the chief of the eunuchs. At its left Bartja, whose hands were heavily fettered, Araspes, Darius,

14. The dangerous disease to which Herodotus says Cambyses had been subject from his birth, and which was called "sacred" by some, can scarcely be other than epilepsy. See Herod. III. 33.

Zopyrus and Gyges. In the background stood some hundred officials and grandees.

After a long silence Cambyses raised his eyes, fixed a withering look on his fettered brother, and said in a dull hollow voice: "High-priest, tell us what awaits the man who deceives his brother, dishonors and offends his king, and darkens his own heart by black lies."

Oropastes came forward and answered: "As soon as such a one is proved guilty, a death full of torment awaits him in this world, and an awful sentence on the bridge Chinvat;[15] for he has transgressed the highest commands, and, by committing three crimes, has forfeited the mercy of our law, which commands that his life shall be granted to the man who has sinned but once, even though he be only a slave."[16]

"Then Bartja has deserved death. Lead him away, guards, and strangle him! Take him away! Be silent, wretch! never will I listen to that smooth, hypocritical tongue again, or look at those treacherous eyes. They come from the Divs and delude every one with their wanton glances. Off with him, guards!"

Bischen, the captain, came up to obey the order, but in the same moment Crœsus threw himself at the king's feet, touched the floor with his forehead, raised

15. On the third day after death, at the rising of the bright sun, the souls are conducted by the Divs to the bridge Chinvât, where they are questioned as to their past lives and conduct. *Vendid.* Fargard. XIX. 93. On that spot the two supernatural powers fight for the soul. *Vendid* Farg. VII. 132. In this struggle the soul of the good, the odor of which is feared by the Divs as wolves by sheep, is helped by the *Yazatas* or pure spirits and enters heaven victorious, while the soul of the impure finds no help and is dragged down, bound, into hell by the Div Vizareshô. Different, and according to Rogge, more beautiful (?) conceptions of this idea are to be found in Tiele's *d. godsd. v. Zarathustra p.* 251. This subject is admirably treated by Spiegel, *Ausland* 1872.

16. Herod. I. 137.

his hands and cried: "May thy days and years bring nought but happiness and prosperity; may Auramazda pour down all the blessings of this life upon thee, and the Amescha çpenta[17] be the guardians of thy throne! Do not close thine ear to the words of the aged, but remember that thy father Cyrus appointed me to be thy counsellor. Thou art about to slay thy brother; but I say unto thee, do not indulge anger; strive to control it. It is the duty of kings and of the wise, not to act without due enquiry. Beware of shedding a brother's blood; the smoke thereof will rise to heaven and become a cloud that must darken the days of the murderer, and at last cast down the lightnings of vengeance on his head. But I know that thou desirest justice, not murder. Act then as those who have to pronounce a sentence, and hear both sides before deciding. When this has been done, if the criminal is proved guilty and confesses his crime, the smoke of his blood will rise to heaven as a friendly shadow, instead of a darkening cloud, and thou wilt have earned the fame of a just judge instead of deserving the divine judgments."

Cambyses listened in silence, made a sign to Bischen to retire, and commanded Boges to repeat his accusation.

The eunuch made an obeisance, and began: "I was ill and obliged to leave the Egyptian and the hanging-gardens in the care of my colleague Kandaules, who has paid for his negligence with his life. Finding myself better towards evening, I went up to the hanging-gardens to see if everything was in order there, and also to look

17. The *Amescha çpenta*, "holy immortal ones," may be compared to the archangels of the Hebrews. They surround the throne of Auramazda and symbolize the highest virtues. Later we find their number fixed at six.

at the rare flower which was to blossom in the night. The king, (Auramazda grant him victory!) had commanded that the Egyptian should be more strictly watched than usual, because she had dared to send the noble Bartja . . ."

"Be silent," interrupted the king "and keep to the matter in hand."

"Just as the Tistar-star was rising, I came into the garden, and staid some time there with these noble Achæmenidæ, the high-priest and the king Crœsus, looking at the blue lily, which was marvellously beautiful. I then called my colleague Kandaules and asked him, in the presence of these noble witnesses, if everything was in order. He affirmed that this was the case and added, that he had just come from Nitetis, that she had wept the whole day, and neither tasted food nor drink. Feeling anxious lest my noble mistress should become worse, I commissioned Kandaules to fetch a physican, and was just on the point of leaving the noble Achæmenidæ, in order in person to ascertain my mistress's state of health, when I saw in the moonlight the figure of a man. I was so ill and weak, that I could hardly stand and had no one near to help me, except the gardener.

"My men were on guard at the different entrances, some distance from us.

"I clapped my hands to call some of them, but, as they did not come, I went nearer to the house myself, under the protection of these noblemen. The man was standing by the window of the Egyptian Princess's apartment, and uttered a low whistle when he heard us coming up. Another figure appeared directly—clearly recognizable in the bright moonlight—sprang out of the

sleeping-room window and came towards us with her companion.

"I could hardly believe my eyes on discovering that the intruder was no other than the noble Bartja. A fig-tree concealed *us* from the fugitives, but we could distinctly see *them*, as they passed us at a distance of not more than four steps. While I was thinking whether I should be justified in arresting a son of Cyrus, Crœsus called to Bartja, and the two figures suddenly disappeared behind a cypress. No one but your brother himself can possibly explain the strange way in which he disappeared. I went at once to search the house, and found the Egyptian lying unconscious on the couch in her sleeping-room."

Every one listened to this story in the greatest suspense. Cambyses ground his teeth and asked in a voice of great emotion: "Can you testify to the words of the eunuch, Hystaspes?"

"Yes."

"Why did you not lay hands on the offender?"

"We are soldiers, not policemen."

"Or rather you care for every knave more than for your king."

"We honor our king, and abhor the criminal just as we formerly loved the innocent son of Cyrus."

"Did you recognize Bartja distinctly?"

"Yes."

"And you, Crœsus,—can you too give no other answer?"

"No! I fancied I saw your brother in the moonlight then, as clearly as I see him now; but I believe we must have been deceived by some remarkable likeness."

Boges grew pale at these words; Cambyses, how-

ever, shook his head as if the idea did not please him, and said: "Whom am I to believe then, if the eyes of my best warriors fail them? and who would wish to be a judge, if testimony such as yours is not to be considered valid?"

"Evidence quite as weighty as ours, will prove that we must have been in error."

"Will any one dare to give evidence in favor of such an outrageous criminal?" asked Cambyses, springing up and stamping his foot.

"We will," "I," "we," shouted Araspes, Darius, Gyges and Zopyrus with one voice.

"Traitors, knaves!" cried the king. But as he caught sight of Crœsus' warning eye fixed upon him, he lowered his voice, and said: "What have you to bring forward in favor of this fellow? Take care what you say, and consider well what punishment awaits perjurers."

"We know that well enough," said Araspes, "and yet we are ready to swear by Mithras, that we have not left Bartja or his garden one moment since we came back from hunting."

"As for me," said Darius, "I, the son of Hystaspes, have especially convincing evidence to give in favor of your brother's innocence; I watched the rising of the Tistar-star with him; and this, according to Boges, was the very star that shone on his flight."

Hystaspes gazed on his son in astonishment and doubt at hearing these words, and Cambyses turned a scrutinizing eye first on the one and then on the other party of these strange witnesses, who wished so much, and yet found it so impossible, to believe one another, himself unable to come to a decision.

Bartja, who till now had remained perfectly silent, looking down sadly at his chained hands, took advantage of the silence to say, making at the same time a deep obeisance: "May I be allowed to speak a few words, my King?"

"Speak!"

"From our father we learnt to strive after that which was pure and good only; so up to this time my life has been unstained. If you have ever known me take part in an evil deed, you have a right not to believe me, but if you find no fault in me then trust to what I say, and remember that a son of Cyrus would rather die than tell a lie. I confess that no judge was ever placed in such a perplexing position. The best men in your kingdom testify against one another, friend against friend, father against son. But I tell you that were the entire Persian nation to rise up against you, and swear that Cambyses had committed this or that evil deed, and you were to say, 'I did not commit it,' I, Bartja, would give all Persia the lie and exclaim, 'Ye are all false witnesses; sooner could the sea cast up fire than a son of Cyrus allow his mouth to deal in lies.' No, Cambyses, you and I are so high-born that no one but yourself can bear evidence against me; and you can only be judged out of your own mouth."

Cambyses' looks grew a little milder on hearing these words, and his brother went on: "So I swear to you by Mithras, and by all pure spirits, that I am innocent. May my life become extinct and my race perish from off the earth, if I tell you a lie, when I say that I have not once set foot in the hanging-gardens since my return!"

Bartja's voice was so firm and his tone so full of

assurance, as he uttered this oath that Cambyses ordered his chains to be loosened, and, after a few moments' thought, said: "I should like to believe you, for I cannot bear to imagine you the worst and most abandoned of men. To-morrow we will summon the astrologers, soothsayers and priests. Perhaps they may be able to discover the truth. Can you see any light in this darkness, Oropastes?"

"Thy servant supposes, that a Div has taken upon him the form of Bartja, in order to ruin the king's brother and stain thine own royal soul with the blood of thy father's son."

Cambyses and every one present nodded their assent to this proposition, and the king was just going to offer his hand to Bartja, when a staff-bearer came in and gave the king a dagger. A eunuch had found it under the windows of Nitetis' sleeping-apartment.

Cambyses examined the weapon carefully. Its costly hilt was thickly set with rubies and turquoises. As he looked he turned pale, and dashed the dagger on the ground before Bartja with such violence, that the stones fell out of their setting.

"This is your dagger, you wretch!" he shrieked, seized by the same violent passion as before. "This very morning you used it to give the last thrust to the wild boar, that I had mortally wounded. Crœsus, you ought to know it too, for my father brought it from your treasure-house at Sardis. At last you are really convicted, you liar!—you impostor! The Divs require no weapons, and such a dagger as this is not to be picked up everywhere. Ah, ha! you are feeling in your girdle! You may well turn pale; your dagger is gone!"

"Yes, it is gone. I must have lost it, and some enemy . . ."

"Seize him, Bischen, put on his fetters! Take him to prison—the traitor, the perjurer! He shall be strangled to-morrow. Death is the penalty of perjury. Your heads for theirs, you guards, if they escape. Not one word more will I hear; away with you, you perjured villains! Boges, go at once to the hanging-gardens and bring the Egyptian to me. Yet no, I won't see that serpent again. It is very near dawn now, and at noon she shall be flogged through the streets. Then I'll . . ."

But here he was stopped by another fit of epilepsy, and sank down on to the marble floor in convulsions.

At this fearful moment Kassandane was led into the hall by the old general Megabyzus. The news of what had happened had found its way to her solitary apartments, and, notwithstanding the hour, she had risen in order to try and discover the truth and warn her son against pronouncing a too hasty decision. She believed firmly that Bartja and Nitetis were innocent, though she could not explain to herself what had happened. Several times she had tried to put herself in communication with Nitetis, but without avail. At last she had been herself to the hanging-gardens, but the guards had actually had the hardihood to refuse her admission.

Crœsus went at once to meet her, told her what had happened, suppressing as many painful details as possible, confirmed her in her belief of the innocence of the accused, and then took her to the bedside of the king.

The convulsions had not lasted long this time. He lay on his golden bed under purple silk coverlets, pale and exhausted. His blind mother seated herself at his

side, Crœsus and Oropastes took their station at the foot of the bed, and in another part of the room, four physicians[18] discussed the patient's condition in low whispers.

Kassandane was very gentle with her son; she begged him not to yield to passionate anger, and to remember what a sad effect every such outburst had on his health.

"Yes, mother, you are right," answered the king, smiling bitterly; "I see that I must get rid of everything that rouses my anger. The Egyptian must die, and my perfidious brother shall follow his mistress."

Kassandane used all her eloquence to convince him of the innocence of the accused, and to pacify his anger, but neither prayers, tears, nor her motherly exhortations, could in the least alter his resolution to rid himself of these murderers of his happiness and peace.

At last he interrupted her lamentations by saying: "I feel fearfully exhausted; I cannot bear these sobs and lamentations any longer. Nitetis has been proved guilty. A man was seen to leave her sleeping-apartment

18. It was natural, that medicine should be carefully studied among a people who set such a high value upon life as did the Persians. Pliny indeed, (XXX. 1.) maintains, that the whole of Zoroaster's religion was founded on the science of medicine, and it is true that there are a great many medical directions to be found in the Avesta. In the *Vendidad*, Farg. VII. there is a detailed list of medical fees. "The physician shall treat a priest for a pious blessing or spell, the master of a house for a small draught animal, etc., the lord of a district for a team of four oxen. If the physician cures the mistress of the house, a female ass shall be his fee, etc., etc." We read in the same Fargard, that the physician had to pass a kind of examination. If he had operated thrice successfully on bad men, on whose bodies he had been permitted to try his skill, he was pronounced "capable for ever." If, on the other hand, three evil Dâevayaçna (worshippers of the Divs) died under his hands, he was pronounced "incapable of healing for evermore." Pliny enumerates a multitude of strange Magian prescriptions. The Vendidad mentions the art of healing as the highest attribute of Thrita, a celebrated mythical hero, not unknown to the inhabitants of India. XX. Fargard. 11.

in the night, and that man was not a thief, but the handsomest man in Persia, and one to whom she had dared to send a letter yesterday evening."

"Do you know the contents of that letter?" asked Crœsus, coming up to the bed.

"No; it was written in Greek. The faithless creature made use of characters, which no one at this court can read."

"Will you permit me to translate the letter?"

Cambyses pointed to a small ivory box in which the ominous piece of writing lay, saying: "There it is; read it; but do not hide or alter a single word, for to-morrow I shall have it read over again by one of the merchants from Sinope."

Crœsus' hopes revived; he seemed to breathe again as he took the paper. But when he had read it over, his eyes filled with tears and he murmured: "The fable of Pandora is only too true; I dare not be angry any longer with those poets who have written severely against women.* Alas, they are all false and faithless! O Kassandane, how the Gods deceive us! they grant us the gift of old age, only to strip us bare like trees in winter, and show us that all our fancied gold was dross and all our pleasant and refreshing drinks poison!"

Kassandane wept aloud and tore her costly robes; but Cambyses clenched his fist while Crœsus was reading the following words:

"Nitetis, daughter of Amasis of Egypt, to Bartja, son of the great Cyrus:

"I have something important to tell you; I can tell it to no one but yourself. To-morrow I hope I shall meet you in your mother's apartments. It lies in your

* See vol. 1. note 155.

power to comfort a sad and loving heart, and to give it one happy moment before death. I have a great deal to tell you, and some very sad news; I repeat that I must see you soon."

The desperate laughter, which burst from her son cut his mother to the heart. She stooped down and was going to kiss him, but Cambyses resisted her caresses, saying: "It is rather a doubtful honor, mother, to be one of your favorites. Bartja did not wait to be sent for twice by that treacherous woman, and has disgraced himself by swearing falsely. His friends, the flower of our young men, have covered themselves with indelible infamy for his sake; and through him, your best beloved daughter . . . but no! Bartja had no share in the corruption of that fiend in Peri's form. Her life was made up of hypocrisy and deceit, and her death shall prove that I know how to punish. Now leave me, for I must be alone."

They had scarcely left the room, when he sprang up and paced backwards and forwards like a madman, till the first crow of the sacred bird Parôdar.* When the sun had risen, he threw himself on his bed again, and fell into a sleep that was like a swoon.

Meanwhile Bartja had written Sappho a farewell letter, and was sitting over the wine with his fellow-prisoners and their elder friend Araspes. "Let us be merry," said Zopyrus, "for I believe it will soon be up with all our merriment. I would lay my life, that we are all of us dead by to-morrow. Pity that men haven't got more than one neck; if we 'd two, I would not mind

* See note 9.

wagering a gold piece or two on the chance of our remaining alive."

"Zopyrus is quite right," said Araspes; "we will make merry and keep our eyes open; who knows how soon they may be closed for ever?"

"No one need be sad who goes to his death as innocently as we do," said Gyges. "Here, cup-bearer, fill my goblet!"

"Ah! Bartja and Darius!" cried Zopyrus, seeing the two speaking in a low voice together, "there you are at your secrets again. Come to us and pass the wine-cup. By Mithras, I can truly say I never wished for death, but now I quite look forward to the black Azis,[19] because he is going to take us all together. Zopyrus would rather die with his friends, than live without them."

"But the great point is to try and explain what has really happened," said Darius.

"It's all the same to me," said Zopyrus, whether I die with or without an explanation, so long as I know I am innocent and have not deserved the punishment of perjury. Try and get us some golden goblets, Bischen; the wine has no flavor out of these miserable brass mugs. Cambyses surely would not wish us to suffer from poverty in our last hours, though he does forbid our fathers and friends to visit us."

"It's not the metal that the cup is made of," said Bartja, "but the wormwood of death, that gives the wine its bitter taste."

"No, really, you're quite out there," exclaimed Zopyrus. "Why I had nearly forgotten that strangling

19. An evil spirit who brings death to men. *Vendid.* XVIII. 45. "Azis, who was created by the Daevas may come to me. He appears in order to snatch me from the world."

generally causes death." As he said this, he touched Gyges and whispered: "Be as cheerful as you can! don't you see that it's very hard for Bartja to take leave of this world? What were you saying, Darius?"

"That I thought Oropastes' idea the only admissible one,—that a Div had taken the likeness of Bartja and visited the Egyptian in order to ruin us."

"Folly! I don't believe in such things."

"But don't you remember the legend of the Div, who took the beautiful form of a minstrel and appeared before king Kawus?"

"Of course," cried Araspes. "Cyrus had this legend so often recited at the banquets, that I know it by heart. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, yes, let us hear it!" cried the young men. Araspes thought a moment, and then began, half singing, half reciting:

When Kawus sat upon his father's throne,
The whole world subject unto him alone,
And countless treasures heaped around him saw,
While vassals trembled at his glance for awe,
Beheld the chains of gold, the jewels bright,
The steeds of Thasir, matchless in their might,
The strings of pearls, the crown of gems so rare,
It seemed no mortal could with him compare.
One day, in golden arbor, 'neath a vine
Of roses sweet, he quaffed the ruby wine.

A Div, concealed beneath the beautcous guise
Of wand'ring minstrel, to a courtier hies.
With Kawus speech he sought. Thus he began:
"I am a singer from Masenderan;[20]
If it doth please the gracious Shah to hear
My voice, let me unto his throne draw near,"

20. Mazenderan, (probably more correct than the Masenderan of Schack), a district in the northern borders of Iran, is, on the one hand, praised in the legends of the heroes for its fertility, but on the other,

Quoth Kawus: "Entrance to the singer give
And 'mid my band of minstrels him receive!"
The Div then struck his lyre, and began
To chant the praises of Masenderan. *

"Do you want to hear the song of Masenderan?" asked Araspes.

"Yes, yes; go on."

"My lovely land Masenderan, all hail!
How laughs with plenty each fair mead and vale,
Fresh roses in thy gardens ever bloom,
Anemones and tulips bright, find room
Upon thy hills, their beauty to display.
Within thy borders reigns eternal May,
A spring alike unmarred by frost or heat.
Thy breezes all are pure, thy fields aye greet
The eye with changeless green. Thy woods resound
With songs of nightingales; deer gaily bound
Thy dales and hill-sides o'er; thy streams all flow
With fragrant waters; perfumed breezes blow;
Colors of every hue delight the eye.
Through Bahman, Ader, Ferwerdin and Di **
The tulips bloom; throughout the circling year,
The hunter finds the falcon ever near.
Far as the confines of thy land extend,
The gleam of silks, the flash of jewels blend;
Thy priests are decked with diadems of gold,
And golden girdles wear thy nobles bold;
Whoe'er within thy blest domain doth live
Hath found the highest joy this earth can give."[21] ***

is spoken of as the abode of evil spirits. To this day the district is blessed with an almost tropical vegetation, and its nobles are proud of calling themselves "Divs." See Ritter, *Erdkunde*, VIII. 426.

21. These words are taken from a beautiful song in Firdusi's Book of Kings, which has been very well translated into German by v. Schack. Firdusi was born about 940 A. D. Ancient Persian history is the subject of his immortal epic poems. The Kai Kawus, who was lured to Mazenderan by the Divs, belonged to the family of the Kajanidæ which must not, as some scholars suppose, be placed on a level with the Achæmenidæ, but must be regarded either as purely mythical,

** May, March, July and April.

* *** Translated by Miss M. J. Safford.

"And Kai Kawus hearkened to the words of the disguised Div and went to Masenderan, and was beaten there by the Divs and deprived of his eyesight."

"But," broke in Darius, "Rustem, the great hero, came and conquered Erscheng and the other bad spirits, freed the captives and restored sight to the blind, by dropping the blood of the slaughtered Divs into their eyes. And so it will be with us, my friends! We shall be set free, and the eyes of Cambyses and of our blind and infatuated fathers will be opened to see our innocence. Listen, Bischen; if we really should be executed, go to the Magi, the Chaldæans, and Nebenchari the Egyptian, and tell them they had better not study the stars any longer, for that those very stars had proved themselves liars and deceivers to Darius."

"Yes," interrupted Araspes, "I always said that dreams were the only real prophecies. Before Abradatas fell in the battle of Sardis, the peerless Panthea dreamt that she saw him pierced by a Lydian arrow."

"You cruel fellow!" exclaimed Zopyrus. "Why do you remind us, that it is much more glorious to die in battle than to have our necks wrung off."

"Quite right," answered the elder man; "I confess that I have seen many a death, which I should prefer to our own,—indeed to life itself. Ah, boys, there was a time when things went better than they do now."

"Tell us something about those times."

or at least as having reigned earlier than the Achæmenidæ. We have ventured to introduce the words of a poet who lived so long after the date of our story, because his poems are strictly founded on the ancient Persian traditions and are thoroughly Persian. Besides, we think the quotation possesses sufficient poetical beauty, to reconcile our readers to the anachronism.

"And tell us why you never married. It won't matter to you in the next world, if we do let out your secret."

"There's no secret; any of your own fathers could tell you what you want to hear from me. Listen then. When I was young,[22] I used to amuse myself with women, but I laughed at the idea of love. It occurred, however, that Panthea, the most beautiful of all women, fell into our hands, and Cyrus gave her into my charge, because I had always boasted that my heart was invulnerable. I saw her every day, and learnt, my friends, that love is stronger than a man's will. However, she refused all my offers, induced Cyrus to remove me from my office near her, and to accept her husband Abradatas as an ally. When her handsome husband went out to the war, this high-minded, faithful woman decked him out with all her own jewels and told him that the noble conduct of Cyrus, in treating her like a sister, when she was his captive, could only be repaid by the most devoted friendship and heroic courage. Abradatas agreed with her, fought for Cyrus like a lion, and fell. Panthea killed herself by his dead body. Her servants, on hearing of this, put an end to their own lives too at the grave of this best of mistresses. Cyrus shed tears over this noble pair, and had a stone set up to their memory, which you can see near Sardis. On it are the simple words: 'To Panthea, Abradatas, and the most faithful of servants.' You see, children, the man who had loved such a woman could never care for another."

22. The story of Panthea, Abradatas, and Araspes, is given by Xenophon in his Cyropaedia with a strong Greek coloring. He probably invented this romance in honor of his hero, Cyrus. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* V.

The young men listened in silence, and remained some time after Araspes had finished, without uttering a word. At last Bartja raised his hands to heaven and cried: "O thou great Auramazda! why dost thou not grant us a glorious end like Abradatas? Why must we die a shameful death like murderers?"

As he said this Crœsus came in, fettered and led by whip-bearers. The friends rushed to him with a storm of questions, and Bartja too went up to embrace the man who had been so long his tutor and guide. But the old man's cheerful face was severe and serious, and his eyes, generally so mild, had a gloomy, almost threatening, expression. He waved the prince coldly back, saying, in a voice which trembled with pain and reproach: "Let my hand go, you infatuated boy! you are not worth all the love I have hitherto felt for you. You have deceived your brother in a fourfold manner, duped your friends, betrayed that poor child who is waiting for you in Naukratis, and poisoned the heart of Amasis' unhappy daughter."

Bartja listened calmly till he heard the word "deceived"; then his hand clenched, and stamping his foot, he cried: "But for your age and infirmities, and the gratitude I owe you, old man, these slanderous words would be your last."

Crœsus heard this outbreak of just indignation unmoved, and answered: "This foolish rage proves that you and Cambyses have the same blood in your veins. It would become you much better to repent of your crimes, and beg your old friend's forgiveness, instead of adding ingratitude to the unheard-of baseness of your other deeds."

At these words Bartja's anger gave way. His

clenched hands sank down powerless at his side, and his cheeks became pale as death.

These signs of sorrow softened the old man's indignation. His love was strong enough to embrace the guilty as well as the innocent Bartja, and taking the young man's right hand in both his own, he looked at him as a father would who finds his son, wounded on the battle-field, and said: "Tell me, my poor, infatuated boy, how was it that your pure heart fell away so quickly to the evil powers?"

Bartja shuddered. The blood came back to his face, but these words cut him to the heart. For the first time in his life his belief in the justice of the gods forsook him.

He called himself the victim of a cruel, inexorable fate, and felt like a hunted animal driven to its last gasp and hearing the dogs and sportsmen fast coming nearer. He had a sensitive, childlike nature, which did not yet know how to meet the hard strokes of fate. His body and his physical courage had been hardened against bodily and physical enemies; but his teachers had never told him how to meet a hard lot in life; for Cambyses and Bartja seemed destined only to drink out of the cup of happiness and joy.

Zopyrus could not bear to see his friend in tears. He reproached the old man angrily with being unjust and severe. Gyges' looks were full of entreaty, and Araspes stationed himself between the old man and the youth, as if to ward off the blame of the elder from cutting deeper into the sad and grieved heart of the younger man. Darius, however, after having watched them for some time, came up with quiet deliberation to Crœsus, and said: "You continue to distress and offend one

another, and yet the accused does not seem to know with what offence he is charged, nor will the accuser hearken to his defence. Tell us, Crœsus, by the friendship which has subsisted between us up to this day, what has induced you to judge Bartja so harshly, when only a short time ago you believed in his innocence?"

The old man told at once what Darius desired to know—that he had seen a letter, written in Nitetis' own hand, in which she made a direct confession of her love to Bartja and asked him to meet her alone. The testimony of his own eyes and of the first men in the realm, nay, even the dagger found under Nitetis' windows, had not been able to convince him that his favorite was guilty; but this letter had gone like a burning flash into his heart and destroyed the last remnant of his belief in the virtue and purity of woman.

"I left the king," he concluded, "perfectly convinced that a sinful intimacy must subsist between your friend and the Egyptian Princess, whose heart I had believed to be a mirror for goodness and beauty alone. Can you find fault with me for blaming him who so shamefully stained this clear mirror, and with it his own not less spotless soul?"

"But how can I prove my innocence?" cried Bartja, wringing his hands. "If you loved me you would believe me; if you really cared for me . . ."

"My boy! in trying to save your life only a few minutes ago, I forfeited my own. When I heard that Cambyses had really resolved on your death, I hastened to him with a storm of entreaties; but these were of no avail, and then I was presumptuous enough to reproach him bitterly in his irritated state of mind. The weak thread of his patience broke, and in a fearful passion he

commanded the guards to behead me at once. I was seized directly by Giv, one of the whip-bearers; but as the man is under obligations to me, he granted me my life until this morning, and promised to conceal the postponement of the execution. I am glad, my sons, that I shall not outlive you, and shall die an innocent man by the side of the guilty."

These last words roused another storm of contradiction.

Again Darius remained calm and quiet in the midst of the tumult. He repeated once more the story of the whole evening exactly, to prove that it was impossible Bartja could have committed the crime laid to his charge. He then called on the accused himself to answer the charge of disloyalty and perfidy. Bartja rejected the idea of an understanding with Nitetis in such short, decided, and convincing words, and confirmed his assertion with such a fearful oath, that Crœsus' persuasion of his guilt first wavered, then vanished, and when Bartja had ended, he drew a deep breath, like a man delivered from a heavy burden, and clasped him in his arms.

But with all their efforts they could come to no explanation of what had really happened. In one thing, however, they were all agreed: that Nitetis loved Bartja and had written the letter with a wrong intention.

"No one who saw her," cried Darius, "when Cambyses announced that Bartja had chosen a wife, could doubt for a moment that she was in love with him. When she let the goblet fall, I heard Phædime's father say that the Egyptian women seemed to take a great interest in the affairs of their brothers-in-law."

While they were talking, the sun rose and shone pleasantly into the prisoners' room.

Bartja murmured: "Mithras means to make our parting difficult."

"No," answered Crœsus, "he only means to light us kindly on our way into eternity."

CHAPTER IV.

THE innocent originator of all this complicated misery had passed many a wretched hour since the birthday banquet. Since those harsh words with which Cambyses had sent her from the hall, not the smallest fragment of news had reached her concerning either her angry lover, or his mother and sister. Not a day had passed since her arrival in Babylon, that had not been spent with Kassandane and Atossa; but now, on her desiring to be carried to them, that she might explain her strange conduct, her new guard, Kandaules, forbade her abruptly to leave the house. She had thought that a free and full account of the contents of her letter from home, would clear up all these misunderstandings. She fancied she saw Cambyses holding out his hand as if to ask forgiveness for his hastiness and foolish jealousy. And then a joyful feeling stole into her mind as she remembered a sentence she had once heard Ibykus say: "As fever attacks a strong man more violently than one of weaker constitution; so a heart that loves strongly and deeply can be far more awfully tormented by jealousy, than one which has been only superficially seized by passion."

If this great connoisseur in love were right, Cambyses must love her passionately, or his jealousy could

not have caught fire so quickly and fearfully. Sad thoughts about her home, however, and dark forebodings of the future would mix with this confidence in Cambyses' love, and she could not shut them out. Mid-day came, the sun stood high and burning in the sky, but no news came from those she loved so well; and a feverish restlessness seized her which increased as night came on. In the twilight Boges came to her, and told her, with bitter scorn, that her letter to Bartja had come into the king's hands, and that the gardener's boy who brought it had been executed. The tortured nerves of the princess could not resist this fresh blow, and before Boges left, he carried the poor girl senseless into her sleeping-room, the door of which he barred carefully.

A few minutes later, two men, one old, the other young, came up through the trap-door which Boges had examined so carefully two days before. The old man remained outside, crouching against the palace-wall; a hand was seen to beckon from the window: the youth obeyed the signal, swung himself over the ledge and into the room at a bound. Then words of love were exchanged, the names Gaumata and Mandane whispered softly, kisses and vows given and received. At last the old man clapped his hands. The youth obeyed, kissed and embraced Nitetis' waiting-maid once more, jumped out of the window into the garden, hurried past the admirers of the blue lily who were just coming up, slipped with his companion into the trap-door which had been kept open, closed it carefully, and vanished.

Mandane hurried to the room in which her mistress generally spent the evening. She was well acquainted

with her habits and knew that every evening, when the stars had risen, Nitetis was accustomed to go to the window looking towards the Euphrates, and spend hours gazing into the river and over the plain; and that at that time she never needed her attendance. So she felt quite safe from fear of discovery in this quarter, and knowing she was under the protection of the chief of the eunuchs himself, could wait for her lover calmly.

But scarcely had she discovered that her mistress had fainted, when she heard the garden filling with people, a confused sound of men's and eunuchs' voices, and the notes of the trumpet used to summon the sentries. At first she was frightened and fancied her lover had been discovered, but Boges appearing and whispering: "He has escaped safely," she at once ordered the other attendants, whom she had banished to the women's apartments during her rendezvous, and who now came flocking back, to carry their mistress into her sleeping-room, and then began using all the remedies she knew of, to restore her to consciousness. Nitetis had scarcely opened her eyes when Boges came in, followed by two eunuchs, whom he ordered to load her delicate arms with fetters.

Nitetis submitted; she could not utter one word, not even when Boges called out as he was leaving the room: "Make yourself happy in your cage, my little imprisoned bird. They've just been telling your lord that a royal marten has been making merry in your dove-cote. Farewell, and think of the poor tormented Boges in this tremendous heat, when you feel the cool damp earth. Yes, my little bird, death teaches us to know our real friends, and so I won't have you buried

in a coarse linen sack, but in a soft silk shawl. Farewell, my darling!"

The poor, heavily-afflicted girl trembled at these words, and when the eunuch was gone, begged Mandane to tell her what it all meant. The girl, instructed by Boges, said that Bartja had stolen secretly into the hanging-gardens, and had been seen by several of the Achæmenidæ as he was on the point of getting in at one of the windows. The king had been told of his brother's treachery, and people were afraid his jealousy might have fearful consequences. The frivolous girl shed abundant tears of penitence while she was telling the story, and Nitetis, fancying this a proof of sincere love and sympathy, felt cheered.

When it was over, however, she looked down at her fetters in despair, and it was long before she could think of her dreadful position quietly. Then she read her letter from home again, wrote the words, "I am innocent," and told the sobbing girl to give the little note containing them to the king's mother after her own death, together with her letter from home. After doing this she passed a wakeful night which seemed as if it would never end. She remembered that in her box of ointments there was a specific for improving the complexion, which, if swallowed in a sufficiently large quantity, would cause death. She had this poison brought to her, and resolved calmly and deliberately, to take her own life directly the executioner should draw near. From that moment she took pleasure in thinking of her last hour, and said to herself: "It is true he causes my death; but he does it out of love." Then she thought she would write to him, and confess all her love. He should not receive the letter until she

was dead, that he might not think she had written it to save her life. The hope that this strong, inflexible man might perhaps shed tears over her last words of love filled her with intense pleasure.

In spite of her heavy fetters, she managed to write the following words: "Cambyses will not receive this letter until I am dead. It is to tell him that I love him more than the gods, the world,—yes, more than my own young life. Kassandane and Atossa must think of me kindly. They will see from my mother's letter that I am innocent, and that it was only for my poor sister's sake that I asked to see Bartja. Boges has told me that my death has been resolved upon. When the executioner approaches, I shall kill myself. I commit this crime against myself, Cambyses, to save you from doing a disgraceful deed."

This note and her mother's she gave to the weeping Mandane, and begged her to give both to Cambyses when she was gone. She then fell on her knees and prayed to the gods of her fathers to forgive her for her apostasy from them.

Mandane begged her to remember her weakness and take some rest, but she answered: "I do not need any sleep, because, you know, I have such little waking-time still left me."

As she went on praying and singing her old Egyptian hymns, her heart returned more and more to the gods of her fathers, whom she had denied after such a short struggle. In almost all the prayers with which she was acquainted, there was a reference to the life after death. In the nether world, the kingdom of Osiris, where the forty-two judges of the dead pronounce sentence on the worth of the soul after it has

been weighed by the goddess of truth and Thoth, who holds the office of writer in heaven, she could hope to meet her dear ones again, but only in case her unjustified soul were not obliged to enter on the career of transmigration through the bodies of different animals, and her body, to whom the soul had been entrusted, remained in a state of preservation.[23] This, "if" filled her with a feverish restlessness. The doctrine that the well-being of the soul depended on the preservation of the earthly part of every human being left behind at death, had been impressed on her from childhood. She believed in this error, which had built pyramids and excavated rocks, and trembled at the thought that, according to the Persian custom, her body would be

23. See Vol. I. note 121. on the Egyptian dogma, which made the welfare of the soul dependent on the preservation of the body, and on their views of the life to come. We will only mention here, that as the dead were to obtain the use of their limbs, mouths, hearts, feet and hands again in the nether world, it was necessary that these should be preserved. Whatever was deficient in the body, would be deficient also in its phantom or shadow. They certainly seem to have exhausted the thought of immortality in every direction. As the sun at night is not dead but only gone to enlighten the lower world, so the Egyptian only seems to die; the real life of his eternal soul only begins after he has taken leave of the earth. The soul descends into the lower world, either to be pronounced just, and in the pure light of the East, a partaker of salvation, to sow the well-watered fields in the plains of Anulu, or Alu, and reap without trouble that which it has sown, until it has become ripe to be merged in Osiris as a part of the world-soul; or, after suffering fearful torments in the purgatory of hell, to be scourged out of the lower world and begin its wanderings through the bodies of animals. In one of the papyri of the dead, the condemned soul is being scourged out of Hades in the form of a sow. After these wanderings, if purified and pardoned, it is at last permitted to unite itself with Osiris, but if not, must again begin the round of purification. Pythagoras borrowed his doctrine of the transmigration of souls from the Egyptians. Plato divested it of its bodily garment in the delicate manner which only he was capable of doing, and transferred the idea into the spiritual kingdom. The Egyptian idea of the transmigration of souls was very different from the belief prevalent in India. On the duration of the soul's wanderings and the phœnix-period, see Lepsius, *Chronologie p.* 181.

thrown to the dogs and birds of prey, and so given up to the powers of destruction, that her soul must be deprived of every hope of eternal life. Then the thought came to her, should she prove unfaithful to the gods of her fathers again, and once more fall down before these new spirits of light, who gave the dead body over to the elements and only judged the soul? And so she raised her hands to the great and glorious sun, who with his golden sword-like rays was just dispersing the mists that hung over the Euphrates, and opened her lips to sing her newly-learnt hymns in praise of Mithras; but her voice failed her,—instead of Mithras she could only see her own great Ra, the god she had so often worshipped in Egypt, and instead of a Magian hymn could only sing the one with which the Egyptian priests are accustomed to greet the rising sun.[24]

Hail, Ra! Let every voice unite.
Bend, bend the knee to Ra, each morn.
Ra, who by his creative might,
With each new day, springs forth newborn.

All hail to thee, thou mighty One!
Source of all life! Thou tak'st thy way,
'Neath the blue vault of Heaven, thy throne,
And all earth's creatures own thy sway.

Hail, Guardian, by whose gentle light
The pure have life and blessings given,
E'en gods, with rapture infinite
Thrill, when thou'rt near, Ra, child of Heaven.*

This hymn brought comfort with it, and as she

24. From an inscription on a tomb in the Berlin Museum, first treated by E. de Rougé, *Zeitschrift der Deutsch-morgenländischen Gesellschaft* IV. 375.

* Translated by Miss M. J. Safford.

gazed on the young light, the rays of which were not yet strong enough to dazzle her, she thought of her childhood, and the tears gathered in her eyes. Then she looked down over the broad plain. There was the Euphrates with his yellow waves looking so like the Nile; the many villages, just as in her own home, peeping out from among luxuriant cornfields and plantations of fig-trees. To the west lay the royal hunting-park; she could see its tall cypresses and nut-trees miles away in the distance. The dew was glistening on every little leaf and blade of grass, and the birds sang deliciously in the shrubberies round her dwelling. Now and then a gentle breath of wind arose, carrying the sweet scent of the roses across to her, and playing in the tops of the slender, graceful palms which grew in numbers on the banks of the river and in the fields around.

She had so often admired these beautiful trees, and compared them to dancing-girls, as she watched the wind seizing their heavy tops and swaying the slender stems backwards and forwards. And she had often said to herself that here must be the home of the Phœnix,* that wonderful bird from the land of palms, who, the priests said, came once in every five hundred years to the temple of Ra in Heliopolis and burnt himself in the sacred incense-flames, only to rise again from his own ashes more beautiful than before, and, after three days, to fly back again to his home in the East. While she was thinking of this bird, and wishing that she too might rise again from the ashes of her unhappiness to a new and still more glorious joy, a large bird with brilliant plumage rose out of the dark cypresses,

* See vol. I. note 117.

which concealed the palace of the man she loved and who had made her so miserable, and flew towards her. It rose higher and higher, and at last settled on a palm-tree close to her window. She had never seen such a bird before, and thought it could not possibly be a usual one, for a little gold chain was fastened to its foot, and its tail seemed made of sunbeams instead of feathers. It must be Benno,* the bird of Ra! She fell on her knees again and sang with deep reverence the ancient hymn to the Phœnix,[25] never once turning her eyes from the brilliant bird.

'The work of an omnipotent Creator,
Far, far above the heads of men I soar.
My mighty pinions cleave the waves of air,
With pride my Maker's glorious pomp I wear,
My wondrous grace and loveliness of mien,
Vies with the flow'rets in the meadows green,
Yet, radiant though I soar in fullest glow
Of light, my nature, birth-place none may know,
While I know all—the past—futurity,
The soul of the eternal Ra am I.' **

The bird listened to her singing, bending his little head with its waving plumes, wisely and inquisitively from side to side, and flew away directly she

25. From the first sentences of chap. 83. of the book of the dead. A picture of the Phœnix stands as vignette at the head of this chapter, which is entitled "the chapter of the transformation into the Benno-bird." In fact the souls are represented in the form of the Phœnix and of other birds. The Benno must be looked at as the soul of the Deity, with which the soul of man, being regarded as a part and emanation of the former, unites itself after earthly death, retaining nevertheless a certain individuality. This union can of course only take place if the soul has been justified and has passed through all the preparatory stages.

* In ancient Egyptian the Phœnix was called Benno. On this bird and the worship paid to him at Heliopolis see vol. I. note 117., vol. II. note 23. Lepsius, *Chron.* p. 180. and Brugsch., *geogr. Inschrift* I. p. 258.

** Translated by Miss M. J. Safford.

ceased. Nitetis looked after him with a smile. It was really only a bird of paradise that had broken the chain by which he had been fastened to a tree in the park, but to her he was the Phœnix. A strange certainty of deliverance filled her heart; she thought the god Ra had sent the bird to her, and that as a happy spirit she should take that form. So long as we are able to hope and wish, we can bear a great deal of sorrow; if the wished-for happiness does not come, anticipation is at least prolonged and has its own peculiar sweetness. This feeling is of itself enough, and contains a kind of enjoyment which can take the place of reality. Though she was so weary, yet she lay down on her couch with fresh hopes, and fell into a dreamless sleep almost against her will, without having touched the poison.

The rising sun generally gives comfort to sad hearts who have passed the night in weeping, but to a guilty conscience, which longs for darkness, his pure light is an unwelcome guest. While Nitetis slept, Mandane lay awake, tormented by fearful remorse. How gladly she would have held back the sun which was bringing on the day of death to this kindest of mistresses, and have spent the rest of her own life in perpetual night, if only her yesterday's deed could but have been undone!

The good-natured, thoughtless girl called herself a wretched murderess unceasingly, resolved again and again to confess the whole truth and so to save Nitetis; but love of life and fear of death gained the victory over her weak heart every time. To confess was certain death, and she felt as if she had been made for life; she had so many hopes for the future, and the grave seemed so dreadful. She thought she could perhaps have confessed the whole truth, if perpetual imprisonment

had been all she had to fear; but death! no, she could not resolve on that. And besides, would her confession really save the already condemned Nitetis?

Had she not sent a message to Bartja herself by that unfortunate gardener's boy? This secret correspondence had been discovered, and that was enough of itself to ruin Nitetis, even if she, Mandane, had done nothing in the matter. We are never so clever as when we have to find excuses for our own sins.

At sunrise, Mandane was kneeling by her mistress's couch, weeping bitterly and wondering that Nitetis could sleep so calmly.

Boges, the eunuch, had passed a sleepless night too, but a very happy one. His hated colleague, Kandaules, whom he had used as a substitute for himself, had been already executed, by the king's command, for negligence, and on the supposition that he had accepted a bribe; Nitetis was not only ruined, but certain to die a shameful death. The influence of the king's mother had suffered a severe shock; and lastly, he had the pleasure of knowing, not only that he had outwitted every one and succeeded in all his plans, but that through his favorite Phædime he might hope once more to become the all-powerful favorite of former days. That sentence of death had been pronounced on Crœsus and the young heroes, was by no means an unwelcome thought either, as they might have been instrumental in bringing his intrigues to light.

In the grey of the morning he left the king's apartment and went to Phædime. The proud Persian had taken no rest. She was waiting for him with feverish

anxiety, as a rumor of all that had happened had already reached the harem and penetrated to her apartments.

She was lying on a purple couch in her dressing-room; a thin silken chemise and yellow slippers thickly sown with turquoises and pearls composed her entire dress. Twenty attendants were standing round her, but the moment she heard Boges she sent her slaves away, sprang up to meet him, and overwhelmed him with a stream of incoherent questions, all referring to her enemy Nitetis.

"Gently, gently, my little bird," said Boges, laying his hand on her shoulder. "If you can't make up your mind to be as quiet as a little mouse while I tell my story, and not to ask one question, you won't hear a syllable of it to-day. Yes, indeed, my golden queen, I've so much to tell that I shall not have finished till to-morrow, if you are to interrupt me as often as you like. Ah, my little lamb, and I've still so much to do to-day. First I must be present at an Egyptian donkey-ride; secondly, I must witness an Egyptian execution . . . but I see I am anticipating my story; I must begin at the beginning. I'll allow you to cry, laugh and scream for joy as much as you will, but you're forbidden to ask a single question until I have finished. I think really I have deserved these caresses. There, now I am quite at my ease, and can begin. Once upon a time there was a great king in Persia, who had many wives, but he loved Phædime better than the rest, and set her above all the others. One day the thought struck him that he would ask for the hand of the King of Egypt's daughter in marriage, and he sent a great embassy to Sais, with his own brother to do the wooing for him—"

"What nonsense!" cried Phædime impatiently; "I want to know what has happened now."

"Patience, patience, my impetuous March wind. If you interrupt me again, I shall go away and tell my story to the trees. You really need not grudge me the pleasure of living my successes over again. While I tell this story, I feel as happy as a sculptor when he puts down his hammer and gazes at his finished work."

"No, no!" said Phædime, interrupting him again. "I cannot listen now to what I know quite well already. I am dying of impatience, and every fresh report that the eunuchs and slave-girls bring makes it worse. I am in a perfect fever—I cannot wait. Ask whatever else you like, only deliver me from this awful suspense. Afterwards I will listen to you for days, if you wish."

Boges' smile at these words was one of great satisfaction; he rubbed his hands and answered: "When I was a child I had no greater pleasure than to watch a fish writhing on the hook; now I have got you, my splendid golden carp, at the end of my line, and I can't let you go until I have sated myself on your impatience."

Phædime sprang up from the couch which she had shared with Boges, stamping her foot and behaving like a naughty child. This seemed to amuse the eunuch immensely; he rubbed his hands again and again, laughed till the tears ran down over his fat cheeks, emptied many a goblet of wine to the health of the tortured beauty, and then went on with his tale: "It had not escaped me that Cambyses sent his brother (who had brought Nitetis from Egypt), out to the war with the Tapuri purely from jealousy. That

proud woman, who was to take no orders from me, seemed to care as little for the handsome, fair-haired boy as a Jew for pork, or an Egyptian for white beans.[26] But still I resolved to nourish the king's jealousy, and use it as a means of rendering this impudent creature harmless, as she seemed likely to succeed in supplanting us both in his favor. It was long, however, before I could hit on a feasible plan.

"At last the new-year's festival arrived.* and all the priests in the kingdom assembled at Babylon. For eight days the city was full of rejoicing, feasting and merry-making. At court it was just the same, and so I had very little time to think of my plans. But just then, when I had hardly any hope of succeeding, the gracious Amescha çpenta** sent a youth across my path, who seemed created by Angramainjus himself to suit my plan. Gaumata, the brother of Oropastes, came to Babylon to be present at the great new-year's sacrifice. I saw him first in his brother's house, whither I had been sent on a message from the king, and his likeness to Bartja was so wonderful, that I almost fancied I was looking at an apparition. When I had finished my business with Oropastes the youth accompanied me to my carriage. I showed no signs of astonishment at this remarkable likeness, treated him

26. The Egyptians were forbidden to eat beans, probably because of their tendency to cause flatulence. Cicero. *De Divin.* I. 30. Plut. *Isis and Osiris* 9. Pythagoras borrowed this prohibition from the Egyptians. It is possible according to Diodorus (I. 89.) that this command was limited to a portion of the Egyptian nation, as some refrained from eating lentiles, others beans, etc. At the present day, beans, which form the principal food of the lower classes, are rarely absent from Egyptian tables. In the Papyrus Ebers they are mentioned among the medicines.

* In March, at the spring equinox. ** See Note 17.

however, with immense civility, and begged him to pay me a visit. He came the very same evening. I sent for my best wine, pressed him to drink, and experienced,—not for the first time,—that the juice of the vine has one quality which outweighs all the rest: it can turn even a silent man into a chatter-box. The youth confessed that the great attraction which had brought him to Babylon was, not the sacrifice, but a girl who held the office of upper attendant to the Egyptian Princess. He said he had loved her since he was a child; but his ambitious brother had higher views for him, and in order to get the lovely Mandane out of his way, had procured her this situation. At last he begged me to arrange an interview with her. I listened good-naturedly, made a few difficulties, and at last asked him to come the next day and see how matters were going on. He came, and I told him that it might be possible to manage it, but only if he would promise to do what I told him without a question. He agreed to everything, returned to Rhagæ at my wish, and did not come to Babylon again until yesterday, when he arrived secretly at my house, where I concealed him. Meanwhile Bartja had returned from the war. The great point now was to excite the king's jealousy again, and ruin the Egyptian at one blow. I roused the indignation of your relations through your public humiliation, and so prepared the way for my plan. Events were wonderfully in my favor. You know how Nitetis behaved at the birthday banquet, but you do not know that that very evening she sent a gardener's boy to the palace with a note for Bartja. The silly fellow managed to get caught and was executed that very night, by command of the king, who was almost mad with rage; and

I took care that Nitetis should be as entirely cut off from all communication with her friends, as if she lived in the nest of the Simurg.[27] You know the rest."

"But how did Gaumata escape?"

"Through a trap-door, of which nobody knows but myself, and which stood wide open waiting for him. Everything turned out marvellously; I even succeeded in getting hold of a dagger which Bartja had lost while hunting, and in laying it under Nitetis' window. In order to get rid of the prince during these occurrences, and prevent him from meeting the king or any one else who might be important as a witness, I asked the Greek merchant Kolæus, who was then at Babylon with a cargo of Milesian cloth, and who is always willing to do me a favor, because I buy all the woollen stuffs required for the harem of him, to write a Greek letter, begging Bartja, in the name of her he loved best, to come alone to the first station outside the Euphrates gate at the rising of the Tistar-star. But I had a misfortune with this letter, for the messenger managed the matter clumsily. He declares that he delivered the letter to Bartja; but there can be no doubt that he gave it to some one else, probably to Gaumata, and I was not a little dismayed to hear that Bartja was sitting over the wine with his friends on that very evening. Still what had been done could not be undone, and I knew that the witness of men like your father, Hystaspes, Crœsus and Intaphernes, would far outweigh anything that Darius, Gyges and Araspes could say. The former would testify against their friend, the latter for

27. The Simurg is the fabulous bird of the Persians, and may be compared to the Roc or Griffin. Sal, the father of Rustem, was brought up in its nest. It was not only spoken of as large and strong, but as "wise." See Firdusi, *Book of Kings. Sal.*

him. And so at last everything went as I would have had it. The young gentlemen are sentenced to death and Crœsus, who as usual, presumed to speak impertinently to the king, will have lived his last hour by this time. As to the Egyptian Princess, the secretary in chief has just been commanded to draw up the following order. Now listen and rejoice, my little dove!

"'Nitetis, the adulterous daughter of the King of Egypt, shall be punished for her hideous crimes according to the extreme rigor of the law, thus: She shall be set astride upon an ass and led through the streets of Babylon; and all men shall see that Cambyses knows how to punish a king's daughter, as severely as his magistrates would punish the meanest beggar.—To Boges, chief of the eunuchs, is entrusted the execution of this order.

By command of King Cambyses.
Ariabignes, chief of the Secretaries.'

"I had scarcely placed these lines in the sleeve of my robe, when the king's mother, with her garments rent, and led by Atossa, pressed hastily into the hall. Weeping and lamentation followed; cries, reproaches, curses, entreaties and prayers; but the king remained firm, and I verily believe Kassandane and Atossa would have been sent after Crœsus and Bartja into the other world, if fear of Cyrus's spirit had not prevented the son, even in this furious rage, from laying hands on his father's widow. Kassandane, however, did not say one word for Nitetis. She seems as fully convinced of her guilt as you and I can be. Neither have we anything to fear from the enamored Gaumata. I have hired three men to give him a cool bath in the Euphrates, before he

gets back to Rhagæ. Ah, ha! the fishes and worms will have a jolly time!"

Phædime joined in Boges' laughter, bestowed on him all the flattering names which she had caught from his own smooth tongue, and in token of her gratitude, hung a heavy chain studded with jewels round his neck with her own beautiful arms.

CHAPTER V.

Before the sun had reached his mid-day height, the news of what had happened and of what was still to happen had filled all Babylon. The streets swarmed with people, waiting impatiently to see the strange spectacle which the punishment of one of the king's wives, who had proved false and faithless, promised to afford. The whip-bearers were forced to use all their authority to keep this gaping crowd in order. Later on in the day the news that Bartja and his friends were soon to be executed arrived among the crowd; they were under the influence of the palm-wine, which was liberally distributed on the king's birthday and the following days, and could not control their excited feelings; but these now took quite another form.

Bands of drunken men paraded the streets, crying: "Bartja, the good son of Cyrus, is to be executed!" The women heard these words in their quiet apartments, eluded their keepers, forgot their veils, and rushing forth into the streets, followed the excited and indignant men with cries and yells. Their pleasure in the thought of seeing a more fortunate sister humbled,

vanished at the painful news that their beloved prince was condemned to death. Men, women and children raged, stormed and cursed, exciting one another to louder and louder bursts of indignation. The workshops were emptied, the merchants closed their warehouses, and the school-boys and servants, who had a week's holiday on occasion of the king's birthday, used their freedom to scream louder than any one else, and often to groan and yell without in the least knowing why.

At last the tumult was so great that the whip-bearers were insufficient to cope with it, and a detachment of the body-guard was sent to patrol the streets. At the sight of their shining armor and long lances, the crowd retired into the side streets, only, however, to reassemble in fresh numbers when the troops were out of sight.

At the gate, called the Bel gate, which led to the great western high-road, the throng was thicker than at any other point, for it was said that through this gate, the one by which she had entered Babylon, the Egyptian Princess was to be led out of the city in shame and disgrace. For this reason a larger number of whip-bearers were stationed here, in order to make way for travellers entering the city. Very few people indeed left the city at all on this day, for curiosity was stronger than either business or pleasure; those, on the other hand, who arrived from the country, took up their stations near the gate on hearing what had drawn the crowd thither.

It was nearly mid-day, and only wanted a few hours to the time fixed for Nitetis' disgrace, when a caravan approached the gate with great speed. The first car-

riage was a so-called *harmamaxa*,* drawn by four horses decked out with bells and tassels; a two-wheeled cart followed, and last in the train was a baggage-wagon drawn by mules. A fine, handsome man of about fifty, dressed as a Persian courtier, and another, much older, in long white robes, occupied the first carriage. The cart was filled by a number of slaves in simple blouses, and broad-brimmed felt hats, wearing the hair cut close to the head. An old man, dressed as a Persian servant, rode by the side of the cart. The driver of the first carriage had great difficulty in making way for his gaily-ornamented horses through the crowd; he was obliged to come to a halt before the gate and call some whip-bearers to his assistance. "Make way for us!" he cried to the captain of the police who came up with some of his men; "the royal post has no time to lose, and I am driving some one, who will make you repent every minute's delay."

"Softly, my son," answered the official. "Don't you see that it's easier to-day to get out of Babylon, than to come in? Whom are you driving?"

"A nobleman, with a passport from the king. Come, be quick and make way for us."

"I don't know about that; your caravan does not look much like royalty."

"What have you to do with that? The pass . . ."

"I must see it, before I let you into the city."

These words were half meant for the traveller, whom he was scrutinizing very suspiciously.

While the man in the Persian dress was feeling in his sleeve for the passport, the whip-bearer turned to some comrades who had just come up, and pointed out

* See vol. I. note at foot of page 204.

the scanty retinue of the travellers, saying: "Did you ever see such a queer cavalcade? There's something odd about these strangers, as sure as my name's Giw. Why, the lowest of the king's carpet-bearers travels with four times as many people, and yet this man has a royal pass and is dressed like one of those who sit at the royal table."

At this moment the suspected traveller handed him a little silken roll scented with musk,[28] sealed with the royal seal, and containing the king's own handwriting.

The whip-bearer took it and examined the seal. "It is all in order," he murmured, and then began to study the characters. But no sooner had he deciphered the first letters than he looked even more sharply than before at the traveller, and seized the horses' bridles, crying out: "Here, men, form a guard round the carriage! this is an impostor."

When he had convinced himself that escape was impossible, he went up to the stranger again and said:

"You are using a pass which does not belong to you. Gyges, the son of Crœsus, the man you give yourself out for, is in prison and is to be executed to-day. You are not in the least like him, and you will have reason to repent having tried to pass for him. Get out of your carriage and follow me."

The traveller, however, instead of obeying, began to speak in broken Persian, and begged the officer rather to take a seat by him in the carriage, for that he had very important news to communicate. The man hesitated a moment; but on seeing a fresh band of

28. From Firdusi:

"And now he wrote on silken stuff so fine
A letter breathing fragrance musk and wine."

whip-bearers come up, he nodded to them to stand before the impatient, chafing horses, and got into the carriage.

The stranger looked at him with a smile and said: "Now, do I look like an impostor?"

"No; your language proves that you are not a Persian, but yet you look like a nobleman."

"I am a Greek, and have come hither to render Cambyses an important service. Gyges is my friend, and lent me his passport when he was in Egypt, in case I should ever come to Persia. I am prepared to vindicate my conduct before the king, and have no reason for fear. On the contrary, the news I bring gives me reason to expect much from his favor. Let me be taken to Crœsus, if this is your duty; he will be surety for me, and will send back your men, of whom you seem to stand in great need to-day. Distribute these gold pieces among them, and tell me without further delay what my poor friend Gyges has done to deserve death, and what is the reason of all this crowd and confusion."

The stranger said this in bad Persian, but there lay so much dignity and confidence in his tone, and his gifts were on such a large scale, that the cringing and creeping servant of despotism felt sure he must be sitting opposite to a prince, crossed his arms reverentially, and, excusing himself from his many pressing affairs, began to relate rapidly. He had been on duty in the great hall during the examination of the prisoners the night before, and could therefore tell all that had happened with tolerable accuracy. The Greek followed his tale eagerly, with many an incredulous shake of his handsome head, however, when the daughter of Amasis and the son of Cyrus were spoken of as having been disloyal

and false. That sentence of death had been pronounced, especially on Crœsus, distressed him visibly, but the sadness soon vanished from his quickly-changing features, and gave place to thought; this in its turn was quickly followed by a joyful look, which could only betoken that the thinker had arrived at a satisfactory result. His dignified gravity vanished in a moment; he laughed aloud, struck his forehead merrily, seized the hand of the astonished captain, and said:

"Should you be glad, if Bartja could be saved?"

"More than I can say."

"Very well, then I will vouch for it, that you shall receive at least two talents,* if you can procure me an interview with the king before the first execution has taken place."

"How can you ask such a thing of me, a poor captain? . . ."

"Yes, you must, you must!"

"I cannot."

"I know well that it is very difficult, almost impossible, for a stranger to obtain an audience of your king; but my errand brooks no delay, for I can prove that Bartja and his friends are not guilty. Do you hear? I can *prove* it. Do you think now, you can procure me admittance?"

"How is it possible?"

"Don't ask, but act. Didn't you say Darius was one of the condemned?"

"Yes."

"I have heard, that his father is a man of very high rank."

* £450.

"He is the first in the kingdom, after the sons of Cyrus."

"Then take me to him at once. He will welcome me when he hears I am able to save his son."

"Stranger, you are a wonderful being. You speak with so much confidence that . . ."

"That you feel you may believe me. Make haste then, and call some of your men to make way for us, and escort us to the palace."

There is nothing, except a doubt, which runs more quickly from mind to mind, than a hope that some cherished wish may be fulfilled, especially when this hope has been suggested to us by some one we can trust.

The officer believed this strange traveller, jumped out of the carriage, flourishing his scourge and calling to his men: "This nobleman has come on purpose to prove Bartja's innocence, and must be taken to the king at once. Follow me, my friends, and make way for him!"

Just at that moment a troop of the guards appeared in sight. The captain of the whip-bearers went up to their commander, and, seconded by the shouts of the crowd, begged him to escort the stranger to the palace.

During this colloquy the traveller had mounted his servant's horse, and now followed in the wake of the Persians.

The good news flew like wind through the huge city. As the riders proceeded, the crowd fell back more willingly, and louder and fuller grew the shouts of joy until at last their march was like a triumphal procession.

In a few minutes they drew up before the palace; but before the brazen gates had opened to admit them, another train came slowly into sight. At the head rode a grey-headed old man; his robes were brown, and rent, in token of mourning, the mane and tail of his horse had been shorn off and the creature colored blue.[29] It was Hystaspes, coming to entreat mercy for his son.

The whip-bearer, delighted at this sight, threw himself down before the old man with a cry of joy, and with crossed arms told him what confidence the traveller had inspired him with.

Hystaspes beckoned to the stranger; he rode up, bowed gracefully and courteously to the old man, without dismounting, and confirmed the words of the whip-bearer. Hystaspes seemed to feel fresh confidence too after hearing the stranger, for he begged him to follow him into the palace and to wait outside the door of the royal apartment, while he himself, conducted by the head chamberlain, went in to the king.

When his old kinsman entered, Cambyses was lying on his purple couch, pale as death. A cup-bearer was kneeling on the ground at his feet, trying to collect the broken fragments of a costly Egyptian drinking-cup which the king had thrown down impatiently because its contents had not pleased his taste. At some distance stood a circle of court-officials, in whose faces it was easy to read that they were afraid of their ruler's wrath, and preferred keeping as far from him as possible. The dazzling light and oppressive heat of a Baby-

29. From the mourning for Iredsch. Firdusi. *Book of Kings.* The brown mourning garment is from Rosenmüller, *Das alte und neue Morgenland*, I. p. 179.

lonian May day came in through the open windows, and not a sound was to be heard in the great room, except the whining of a large dog of the Epirote breed, which had just received a tremendous kick from Cambyses for venturing to fawn on his master, and was the only being that ventured to disturb the solemn stillness. Just before Hystaspes was led in by the chamberlain, Cambyses had sprung up from his couch. This idle repose had become unendurable, he felt suffocated with pain and anger. The dog's howl suggested a new idea to his poor tortured brain, thirsting for forgetfulness.

"We will go out hunting!" he shouted to the poor startled courtiers. The master of the hounds, the equerries, and huntsmen hastened to obey his orders. He called after them, "I shall ride the unbroken horse Reksch;[30] get the falcons ready, let all the dogs out and order every one to come, who can throw a spear. We'll clear the preserves!"

He then threw himself down on his divan again, as if these words had quite exhausted his powerful frame, and did not see that Hystaspes had entered, for his sullen gaze was fixed on the motes playing in the sunbeams that glanced through the window.

Hystaspes did not dare to address him; but he stationed himself in the window so as to break the stream of motes and thus draw attention to himself.

At first Cambyses looked angrily at him and his rent garments, and then asked with a bitter smile ; "What do you want?"

"Victory to the king! Your poor servant and uncle has come to entreat his ruler's mercy."

30. The celebrated war-horse of Rustem had the same name. It signifies "Lightning."

"Then rise and go! You know, that I have no mercy for perjurers and false swearers. 'Tis better to have a dead son than a dishonorable one."

"But if Bartja should not be guilty, and Darius . . ."

"You dare to question the justice of my sentence?"

"That be far from me. Whatever the king does is good, and cannot be gainsaid; but still . . ."

"Be silent! I will not hear the subject mentioned again. You are to be pitied as a father; but have these last few hours brought me any joy? Old man, I grieve for you, but I have as little power to rescind his punishment as you to recall his crime."

"But if Bartja really should not be guilty—if the gods . . ."

"Do you think the gods will come to the help of perjurers and deceivers?"

"No, my King; but a fresh witness has appeared."

"A fresh witness? Verily, I would gladly give half my kingdom, to be convinced of the innocence of men so nearly related to me."

"Victory to my lord, the eye of the realm! A Greek is waiting outside, who seems, to judge by his figure and bearing, one of the noblest of his race."

The king laughed bitterly: "A Greek! Ah, ha! perhaps some relation to Bartja's faithful fair one! What can this stranger know of my family affairs? I know these beggarly Ionians well. They are impudent enough to meddle in everything, and think they can cheat us with their sly tricks. How much have you had to pay for this new witness, uncle? A Greek is as ready with a lie as a Magian with his spells, and I know they'll do anything for gold. I'm really curious

to see your witness. Call him in. But if he wants to deceive me, he had better remember that where the head of a son of Cyrus is about to fall, a Greek head has but very little chance." And the king's eyes flashed with anger as he said these words. Hystaspes, however, sent for the Greek.

Before he entered, the chamberlains fastened the usual cloth before his mouth, and commanded him to cast himself on the ground before the king. The Greek's bearing, as he approached, under the king's penetrating glance, was calm and noble; he fell on his face, and, according to the Persian custom, kissed the ground.

His agreeable and handsome appearance, and the calm and modest manner in which he bore the king's gaze, seemed to make a favorable impression on the latter; he did not allow him to remain long on the earth, and asked him in a by no means unfriendly tone:

"Who are you?"

"I am a Greek nobleman. My name is Phanes, and Athens is my home. I have served ten years as commander of the Greek mercenaries in Egypt, and not ingloriously."

"Are you the man, to whose clever generalship the Egyptians were indebted for their victories in Cyprus?"

"I am."

"What has brought you to Persia?"

"The glory of your name, Cambyses, and the wish to devote my arms and experience to your service."

"Nothing else? Be sincere, and remember that one single lie may cost your life. We Persians have different ideas of truth from the Greeks."

"Lying is hateful to me too, if only, because, as a

distortion and corruption of what is noblest, it seems unsightly in my eyes."

"Then speak."

"There was certainly a third reason for my coming hither, which I should like to tell you later. It has reference to matters of the greatest importance, which it will require a longer time to discuss; but to-day . . ."

"Just to-day I should like to hear something new. Accompany me to the chase. You come exactly at the right time, for I never had more need of diversion than now."

"I will accompany you with pleasure, if . . ."

"No conditions to the king! Have you had much practice in hunting?"

"In the Libyan desert I have killed many a lion."

"Then come, follow me."

In the thought of the chase the king seemed to have thrown off all his weakness and roused himself to action; he was just leaving the hall, when Hystaspes once more threw himself at his feet, crying with up-raised hands: "Is my son—is your brother, to die innocent? By the soul of your father, who used to call me his truest friend, I conjure you to listen to this noble stranger."

Cambyses stood still. The frown gathered on his brow again, his voice sounded like a menace and his eyes flashed as he raised his hand and said to the Greek: "Tell me what you know; but remember that in every untrue word, you utter your own sentence of death."

Phanes heard this threat with the greatest calmness, and answered, bowing gracefully as he spoke: "From the sun and from my lord the king, nothing can be hid.

What power has a poor mortal to conceal the truth from one so mighty? The noble Hystaspes has said, that I am able to prove your brother innocent. I will only say, that I wish and hope I may succeed in accomplishing anything so great and beautiful. The gods have at least allowed me to discover a trace which seems calculated to throw light on the events of yesterday; but you yourself must decide whether my hopes have been presumptuous and my suspicions too easily aroused. Remember, however, that throughout, my wish to serve you has been sincere, and that if I have been deceived, my error is pardonable; that nothing is perfectly certain in this world, and every man believes that to be infallible which seems to him the most probable."

"You speak well, and remind me of . . . curse her! there, speak and have done with it! I hear the dogs already in the court."

"I was still in Egypt when your embassy came to fetch Nitetis. At the house of Rhodopis, my delightful, clever and celebrated countrywoman, I made the acquaintance of Crœsus and his son; I only saw your brother and his friends once or twice, casually; still I remembered the young prince's handsome face so well, that some time later, when I was in the workshop of the great sculptor Theodorus at Samos, I recognized his features at once."

"Did you meet him at Samos?"

"No, but his features had made such a deep and faithful impression on Theodorus' memory, that he used them to beautify the head of an Apollo, which the Alkmæonidæ had ordered for the new temple of Delphi."

"Your tale begins, at least, incredibly enough. How is it possible to copy features so exactly, when you have not got them before you?"

"I can only answer that Theodorus has really completed this master-piece, and if you wish for a proof of his skill would gladly send you a second likeness of . . ."

"I have no desire for it. Go on with your story."

"On my journey hither, which, thanks to your father's excellent arrangements, I performed in an incredibly short time, changing horses every sixteen or seventeen miles . . ."

"Who allowed you, a foreigner, to use the post-horses?"

"The pass drawn out for the son of Crœsus, which came by chance into my hands, when once, in order to save my life, he forced me to change clothes with him."

"A Lydian can outwit a fox, and a Syrian a Lydian, but an Ionian is a match for both," muttered the king, smiling for the first time; "Crœsus told me this story—poor Crœsus!" and then the old gloomy expression came over his face and he passed his hand across his forehead, as if trying to smooth the lines of care away. The Athenian went on: "I met with no hindrances on my journey till this morning at the first hour after midnight, when I was detained by a strange occurrence."

The king began to listen more attentively, and reminded the Athenian, who spoke Persian with difficulty, that there was no time to lose.

"We had reached the last station but one," continued he, "and hoped to be in Babylon by sunrise. I was thinking over my past stirring life, and was so haunted

by the remembrance of evil deeds unrevenged that I could not sleep; the old Egyptian at my side, however, slept and dreamt peacefully enough, lulled by the monotonous tones of the harness bells, the sound of the horses' hoofs and the murmur of the Euphrates. It was a wonderfully still, beautiful night; the moon and stars were so brilliant, that our road and the landscape were lighted up almost with the brightness of day. For the last hour we had not seen a single vehicle, foot-passenger, or horseman; we had heard that all the neighboring population had assembled in Babylon to celebrate your birthday, gaze with wonder at the splendor of your court, and enjoy your liberality. At last the irregular beat of horses' hoofs, and the sound of bells struck my ear, and a few minutes later I distinctly heard cries of distress. My resolve was taken at once; I made my Persian servant dismount, sprang into his saddle, told the driver of the cart in which my slaves were sitting not to spare his mules, loosened my dagger and sword in their scabbards, and spurred my horse towards the place from whence the cries came. They grew louder and louder. I had not ridden a minute, when I came on a fearful scene. Three wild-looking fellows had just pulled a youth, dressed in the white robes of a Magian, from his horse, stunned him with heavy blows, and, just as I reached them, were on the point of throwing him into the Euphrates, which at that place washes the roots of the palms and fig-trees bordering the high-road. I uttered my Greek war-cry, which has made many an enemy tremble before now, and rushed on the murderers. Such fellows are always cowards; the moment they saw one of their accomplices mortally wounded, they fled. I did not pursue them, but stooped down

to examine the poor boy, who was severely wounded. How can I describe my horror at seeing, as I believed, your brother Bartja? Yes, they were the very same features that I had seen, first at Naukratis and then in Theodorus' workshop, they were . . ."

"Marvellous!" interrupted Hystaspes.

"Perhaps a little too much so to be credible," added the king. "Take care, Hellene! remember my arm reaches far. I shall have the truth of your story put to the proof."

"I am accustomed," answered Phanes bowing low, "to follow the advice of our wise philosopher Pythagoras, whose fame may perhaps have reached your ears, and always, before speaking, to consider whether what I am going to say may not cause me sorrow in the future."

"That sounds well; but, by Mithras, I knew some one who often spoke of that great teacher, and yet in her deeds turned out to be a most faithful disciple of Angramainjus. You know the traitress, whom we are going to extirpate from the earth like a poisonous viper to-day."

"Will you forgive me," answered Phanes, seeing the anguish expressed in the king's features, "if I quote another of the great master's maxims?"

"Speak."

"Blessings go as quickly as they come. Therefore bear thy lot patiently. Murmur not, and remember that the gods never lay a heavier weight on any man than he can bear. Hast thou a wounded heart? touch it as seldom as thou wouldst a sore eye. There are only two remedies for heart-sickness:—hope and patience."

Cambyses listened to this sentence, borrowed from

the golden maxims of Pythagoras, and smiled bitterly at the word "patience." Still the Athenian's way of speaking pleased him, and he told him to go on with his story.

Phanes made another deep obeisance, and continued: "We carried the unconscious youth to my carriage, and brought him to the nearest station. There he opened his eyes, looked anxiously at me, and asked who I was and what had happened to him? The master of the station was standing by, so I was obliged to give the name of Gyges in order not to excite his suspicions by belying my pass, as it was only through this that I could obtain fresh horses.

"This wounded young man seemed to know Gyges, for he shook his head and murmured: 'You are not the man you give yourself out for.' Then he closed his eyes again, and a violent attack of fever came on.

"We undressed, bled him and bound up his wounds. My Persian servant, who had served as overlooker in Amasis' stables and had seen Bartja there, assisted by the old Egyptian who accompanied me, was very helpful, and asserted untiringly that the wounded man could be no other than your brother. When we had cleansed the blood from his face, the master of the station too swore that there could be no doubt of his being the younger son of your great father Cyrus. Meanwhile my Egyptian companion had fetched a potion from the travelling medicine-chest,[31] without which an Egyptian does not care to leave his native

31. A similar travelling medicine-chest is to be seen in the Egyptian Museum at Berlin. It is prettily and compendiously fitted up, and must be very ancient, for the inscription on the chest, which contained it stated that it was made in the 11th dynasty (end of the third century B. C.) in the reign of King Mentuhotep.

country. The drops worked wonders; in a few hours the fever was quieted, and at sunrise the patient opened his eyes once more. We bowed down before him, believing him to be your brother, and asked if he would like to be taken to the palace in Babylon. This he refused vehemently, and asseverated that he was not the man we took him for, but, . . ."

"Who can be so like Bartja? tell me quickly," interrupted the king, "I am very curious to know this."

"He declared that he was the brother of your high-priest, that his name was Gaumata, and that this would be proved by the pass which we should find in the sleeve of his Magian's robe. The landlord found this document and, being able to read, confirmed the statement of the sick youth; he was, however, soon seized by a fresh attack of fever, and began to speak incoherently."

"Could you understand him?"

"Yes, for his talk always ran on the same subject. The hanging-gardens seemed to fill his thoughts. He must have just escaped some great danger, and probably had had a a lover's meeting there with a woman called Mandane."

"Mandane, Mandane," said Cambyses in a low voice; "if I do not mistake, that is the name of the highest attendant on Amasis' daughter."

These words did not escape the sharp ears of the Greek. He thought a moment and then exclaimed with a smile; "Set the prisoners free, my King; I will answer for it with my own head, that Bartja was not in the hanging-gardens."

The king was surprised at this speech but not angry. The free, unrestrained, graceful manner of this Athenian towards himself produced the same impression,

that a fresh sea-breeze makes when felt for the first time. The nobles of his own court, even his nearest relations, approached him bowing and cringing, but this Greek stood erect in his presence; the Persians never ventured to address their ruler without a thousand flowery and flattering phrases, but the Athenian was simple, open and straightforward. Yet his words were accompanied by such a charm of action and expression, that the king could understand them, notwithstanding the defective Persian in which they were clothed, better than the allegorical speeches of his own subjects. Nitetis and Phanes were the only human beings, who had ever made him forget that he was a king. With them he was a man speaking to his fellow-man, instead of a despot speaking with creatures whose very existence was the plaything of his own caprice. Such is the effect produced by real manly dignity, superior culture and the consciousness of a right to freedom, on the mind even of a tyrant. But there was something beside all this, that had helped to win Cambyses' favor for the Athenian. This man's coming seemed as if it might possibly give him back the treasure he had believed was lost and more than lost. But how could the life of such a foreign adventurer be accepted as surety for the sons of the highest Persians in the realm? The proposal, however, did not make him angry. On the contrary, he could not help smiling at the boldness of this Greek, who in his eagerness had freed himself from the cloth which hung over his mouth and beard, and exclaimed: "By Mithras, Greek, it really seems as if you were to prove a messenger of good for us! I accept your offer. If the prisoners, notwithstanding your supposition, should still prove guilty you are bound to pass your whole life at

my court and in my service, but if, on the contrary, you are able to prove what I so ardently long for, I will make you richer than any of your countrymen."

Phanes answered by a smile which seemed to decline this munificent offer, and asked: "Is it permitted me to put a few questions to yourself and to the officers of your court?"

"You are allowed to say and ask whatever you wish."

At this moment the master of the huntsmen, one of those who daily ate at the king's table, entered, out of breath from his endeavors to hasten the preparations, and announced that all was ready.

"They must wait," was the king's imperious answer. "I am not sure, that we shall hunt at all to-day. Where is Bischen, the captain of police?"

Datis, the so-called "eye of the king,"[32] who held the office filled in modern days by a minister of police, hurried from the room, returning in a few minutes with the desired officer. These moments Phanes made use of for putting various questions on important points to the nobles who were present.

"What news can you bring of the prisoners?" asked the king, as the man lay prostrate before him.

"Victory to the king! They await death with calmness, for it is sweet to die by thy will."

"Have you heard anything of their conversation?"

"Yes, my Ruler."

"Do they acknowledge their guilt, when speaking to each other?"

"Mithras alone knows the heart; but you, my prince, if you could hear them speak, would believe in

32. See Vol. I. note 239.

their innocence, even as I the humblest of your servants."

The captain looked up timidly at the king, fearing lest these words should have excited his anger; Cambyses, nowever, smiled kindly instead of rebuking him. But a sudden thought darkened his brow again directly, and in a low voice he asked: "When was Crœsus executed?"

The man trembled at this question; the perspiration stood on his forehead, and he could scarcely stammer the words: "He is . . . he has . . . we thought . . ."

"What did you think?" interrupted Cambyses, and a new light of hope seemed to dawn in his mind. "Is it possible, that you did not carry out my orders at once? Can Crœsus still be alive? Speak at once, I must know the whole truth."

The captain writhed like a worm at his lord's feet, and at last stammered out, raising his hands imploringly towards the king: "Have mercy, have mercy, my Lord the king! I am a poor man, and have thirty children, fifteen of whom . . ."

"I wish to know if Crœsus is living or dead."

"He is alive! He has done so much for me, and I did not think I was doing wrong in allowing him to live a few hours longer, that he might . . ."

"That is enough," said the king breathing freely. "This once your disobedience shall go unpunished, and the treasurer may give you two talents, as you have so many children.—Now go to the prisoners,—tell Crœsus to come hither, and the others to be of good courage, if they are innocent."

"My King is the light of the world, and an ocean of mercy."

"Bartja and his friends need not remain any longer in confinement; they can walk in the court of the palace, and you will keep guard over them. You, Datis, go at once to the hanging-gardens and order Boges to defer the execution of the sentence on the Egyptian Princess; and further, I wish messengers sent to the post-station mentioned by the Athenian, and the wounded man brought hither under safe escort."

The "king's eye" was on the point of departure, but Phanes detained him, saying: "Does my King allow me to make one remark?"

"Speak."

"It appears to me, that the chief of the eunuchs could give the most accurate information. During his delirium the youth often mentioned his name in connection with that of the girl he seemed to be in love with."

"Go at once, Datis, and bring him quickly."

"The high-priest Oropastes, Gaumata's brother, ought to appear too; and Mandane, whom I have just been assured on the most positive authority, is the principal attendant of the Egyptian Princess."

"Fetch her, Datis."

"If Nitetis herself could . . ."

At this the king turned pale and a cold shiver ran through his limbs. How he longed to see his darling again! But the strong man was afraid of this woman's reproachful looks; he knew the captivating power that lay in her eyes. So he pointed to the door, saying: "Fetch Boges and Mandane; the Egyptian Princess is to remain in the hanging-gardens, under strict custody."

The Athenian bowed deferentially; as if he would

say: "Here no one has a right to command but the king."

Cambyses looked well pleased, seated himself again on the purple divan, and resting his forehead on his hand, bent his eyes on the ground and sank into deep thought. The picture of the woman he loved so dearly refused to be banished; it came again and again, more and more vividly, and the thought that these features could not have deceived him—that Nitetis must be innocent—took a firmer root in his mind; he had already begun to hope. If Bartja could be cleared, there was no error that might not be conceivable; in that case he would go to the hanging-gardens, take her hand and listen to her defence. When love has once taken firm hold of a man in riper years, it runs and winds through his whole nature like one of his veins, and can only be destroyed with his life.

The entrance of Crœsus roused Cambyses from his dream; he raised the old man kindly from the prostrate position at his feet, into which he had thrown himself on entering, and said: "You offended me, but I will be merciful; I have not forgotten that my father, on his dying bed, told me to make you my friend and adviser. Take your life back as a gift from me, and forget my anger as I wish to forget your want of reverence. This man says he knows you; I should like to hear your opinion of his conjectures."

Crœsus turned away much affected, and after having heartily welcomed the Athenian, asked him to relate his suppositions and the grounds on which they were founded.

The old man grew more and more attentive as the Greek went on, and when he had finished raised his

hands to heaven, crying: "Pardon me, oh ye eternal gods, if I have ever questioned the justice of your decrees. Is not this marvellous, Cambyses? My son once placed himself in great danger to save the life of this noble Athenian, whom the gods have brought hither to repay the deed tenfold. Had Phanes been murdered in Egypt, this hour might have seen our sons executed."

And as he said this he embraced Hystaspes; both shared one feeling; their sons had been as dead and were now alive.

The king, Phanes, and all the Persian dignitaries watched the old men with deep sympathy, and though the proofs of Bartja's innocence were as yet only founded on conjecture, not one of those present doubted it one moment longer. Wherever the belief in a man's guilt is but slight, his defender finds willing listeners.

CHAPTER VI.

THE sharp-witted Athenian saw clearly how matters lay in this sad story; nor did it escape him that malice had had a hand in the affair. How could Bartja's dagger have come into the hanging-gardens except through treachery?

While he was telling the king his suspicions, Oropastes was led into the hall.

The king looked angrily at him and without one preliminary word, asked: "Have you a brother?"

"Yes, my King. He and I are the only two left out of a family of six. My parents . . ."

"Is your brother younger or older than yourself?"

"I was the eldest of the family; my brother, the youngest, was the joy of my father's old age."

"Did you ever notice a remarkable likeness between him and one of my relations?"

"Yes, my King. Gaumata is so like your brother Bartja, that in the school for priests at Rhagæ, where he still is, he was always called 'the prince.'"

"Has he been at Babylon very lately?"

"He was here for the last time at the New Year's festival."

"Are you speaking the truth?"

"The sin of lying would be doubly punishable in one who wears my robes, and holds my office."

The king's face flushed with anger at this answer and he exclaimed: "Nevertheless you are lying; Gaumata was here yesterday evening. You may well tremble."

"My life belongs to the king, whose are all things; nevertheless I swear—I, the high-priest—by the most high God, whom I have served faithfully for thirty years, that I know nothing of my brother's presence in Babylon yesterday."

"Your face looks as if you were speaking the truth."

"You know that I was not absent from your side the whole of that high holiday."

"I know it."

Again the doors opened; this time they admitted the trembling Mandane. The high-priest cast such a look of astonishment and enquiry on her, that the king saw she must be in some way connected with him, and therefore, taking no notice of the trembling girl who

lay at his feet, he asked: "Do you know this woman?"

"Yes, my King. I obtained for her the situation of upper attendant to the—may Auramazda forgive her! —King of Egypt's daughter."

"What led you,—a priest,—to do a favor to this girl?"

"Her parents died of the same pestilence, which carried off my brothers. Her father was a priest, respected, and a friend of our family; so we adopted the little girl, remembering the words: 'If thou withhold help from the man who is pure in heart and from his widow and orphans, then shall the pure, subject earth cast thee out unto the stinging-nettles, to painful sufferings and to the most fearful regions!' Thus I became her foster-father, and had her brought up with my youngest brother until he was obliged to enter the school for priests."

The king exchanged a look of intelligence with Phanes, and asked: "Why did not you keep the girl longer with you?"

"When she had received the ear-rings* I, as priest, thought it more suitable to send such a young girl away from my house, and to put her in a position to earn her own living."

"Has she seen your brother since she has been grown up?"

"Yes, my King. Whenever Gaumata came to see me I allowed him to be with her as with a sister; but on discovering later that the passionate love of youth had begun to mingle with the childish friendship of

* See vol. I. note 236.

former days, I felt strengthened in my resolution to send her away."

"Now we know enough," said the king, commanding the high-priest by a nod to retire. He then looked down on the prostrate girl, and said imperiously: "Rise!"

Mandane rose, trembling with fear. Her fresh young face was pale as death, and her red lips were blue from terror.

"Tell all you know about yesterday evening; but remember, a lie and your death are one and the same."

The girl's knees trembled so violently that she could hardly stand, and her fear entirely took away the power of speaking.

"I have not much patience," exclaimed Cambyses.

Mandane started, grew paler still, but could not speak. Then Phanes came forward and asked the angry king to allow him to examine the girl, as he felt sure that fear alone had closed her lips and that a kind word would open them.

Cambyses allowed this, and the Athenian's words proved true; no sooner had he assured Mandane of the good-will of all present, laid his hand on her head and spoken kindly to her, than the source of her tears was unlocked, she wept freely, the spell which had seemed to chain her tongue, vanished, and she began to tell her story, interrupted only by low sobs. She hid nothing, confessed that Boges had given her his sanction and assistance to the meeting with Gaumata, and ended by saying: "I know that I have forfeited my life, and am the worst and most ungrateful creature in the world; but none of all this would have hap-

pened, if Oropastes had allowed his brother to marry me."

The serious audience, even the king himself, could not resist a smile at the longing tone in which these words were spoken and the fresh burst of sobs which succeeded them.

And this smile saved her life. But Cambyses would not have smiled, after hearing such a story, if Mandane, with that instinct which always seems to stand at a woman's command in the hour of her greatest danger, had not known how to seize his weak side, and use it for her own interests, by dwelling much longer than was necessary, on the delight which Nitetis had manifested at the king's gifts.

"A thousand times" cried she, "did my mistress kiss the presents which were brought from you, O King; but oftenest of all did she press her lips to the nosegay which you plucked with your own hands for her, some days ago. And when it began to fade, she took every flower separately, spread out the petals with care, laid them between woollen cloths, and, with her own hands, placed her heavy, golden ointment-box upon them, that they might dry and so she might keep them always as a remembrance of your kindness."

Seeing Cambyses' awful features grow a little milder at these words, the girl took fresh courage, and at last began to put loving words into her mistress's mouth which the latter had never uttered, professing that she herself had heard Nitetis a hundred times murmur the word "Cambyses" in her sleep with indescribable tenderness. She ended her confession by sobbing and praying for mercy.

The king looked down at her with infinite contempt,

though without anger, and pushing her away with his foot said: "Out of my sight, you dog of a woman! Blood like yours would soil the executioner's axe. Out of my sight!"

Mandane needed no second command to depart. The words "out of my sight" sounded like sweet music in her ears. She rushed through the courts of the palace, and out into the streets, crying like a mad woman: "I am free! I am free!"

She had scarcely left the hall, when Datis "the king's eye" reappeared with the news that the chief of the eunuchs was nowhere to be found. He had vanished from the hanging-gardens in an unaccountable manner; but he, Datis, had left word with his subordinates that he was to be searched for and brought, dead or alive.

The king went off into another violent fit of passion at this news, and threatened the officer of police, who prudently concealed the excitement of the crowd from his lord, with a severe punishment, if Boges were not in their hands by the next morning.

As he finished speaking, a eunuch was brought into the hall, sent by the king's mother to ask an interview for herself with her son.

Cambyses prepared at once to comply with his mother's wish, at the same time giving Phanes his hand to kiss, a rare honor, only shown to those that ate at the king's table, and saying: "All the prisoners are to be set at liberty. Go to your sons, you anxious, troubled fathers, and assure them of my mercy and favor. I think we shall be able to find a satrapy a-piece for them, as compensation for to-night's undeserved imprisonment. To you, my Greek friend, I

am deeply indebted. In discharge of this debt, and as a means of retaining you at my court, I beg you to accept one hundred talents* from my treasury."

"I shall scarcely be able to use so large a sum," said Phanes, bowing low.

"Then abuse it," said the king with a friendly smile, and calling out to him, "We shall meet again at supper," he left the hall accompanied by his court.

In the meantime there had been sadness and mourning in the apartments of the queen-mother. Judging from the contents of the letter to Bartja, Kassandane had made up her mind that Nitetis was faithless, and her own beloved son innocent. But in whom could she ever place confidence again, now that this girl, whom she had looked upon as the very embodiment of every womanly virtue, had proved reprobate and faithless—now that the noblest youths in the realm had proved perjurers?

Nitetis was more than dead for her; Bartja, Crœsus, Darius, Gyges, Araspes, all so closely allied to her by relationship and friendship, as good as dead. And yet she durst not indulge her sorrow; she had to restrain the despairing outbursts of grief of her impetuous child.

Atossa behaved like one deprived of her senses when she heard of the sentences of death. The self-control which she had learnt from Nitetis gave way, and her old impetuosity burst forth again with double vehemence.

* £22,500.

Nitetis, her only friend,—Bartja, the brother whom she loved with her whole heart,—Darius, whom she felt now she not only looked up to as her deliverer, but loved with all the warmth of a first affection—Crœsus to whom she clung like a father,—she was to lose every one she loved in one day.

She tore her dress and her hair, called Cambyses a monster, and every one who could possibly believe in the guilt of such people, infatuated or insane. Then her tears would burst out afresh, she would utter imploring supplications to the gods for mercy, and a few minutes later, begin conjuring her mother to take her to the hanging-gardens, that they might hear Nitetis' defence of her own conduct.

Kassandane tried to soothe the violent girl, and assured her every attempt to visit the hanging-gardens would be in vain. Then Atossa began to rage again, until at last her mother was forced to command silence, and as morning had already began to dawn, sent her to her sleeping-room.

The girl obeyed, but instead of going to bed, seated herself at a tall window looking towards the hanging-gardens. Her eyes filled with tears again, as she thought of her friend—her sister—sitting in that palace alone, forsaken, banished, and looking forward to an ignominious death. Suddenly her tearful, weary eyes lighted up as if from some strong purpose, and instead of gazing into the distance, she fixed them on a black speck which flew towards her in a straight line from Nitetis' house, becoming larger and more distinct every moment; and finally settling on a cypress before her window. The sorrow vanished at once from her lovely face and with a deep sigh of relief she sprang up, exclaiming:

"Oh, there is the Homaï,[33] the bird of good fortune! Now everything will turn out well."

It was the same bird of paradise which had brought so much comfort to Nitetis that now gave poor Atossa fresh confidence.

She bent forward to see whether any one was in the garden; and finding that she would be seen by no one but the old gardener, she jumped out, trembling like a fawn, plucked a few roses and cypress twigs and took them to the old man, who had been watching her performances with a doubtful shake of the head.

She stroked his cheeks coaxingly, put her flowers in his brown hand, and said: "Do you love me, Sabaces?"

"O, my mistress!" was the only answer the old man could utter, as he pressed the hem of her robe to his lips.

"I believe you, my old friend, and I will show you how I trust my faithful, old Sabaces. Hide these flowers carefully and go quickly to the king's palace. Say that you had to bring fruit for the table. My poor brother Bartja, and Darius, the son of the noble Hystaspes, are in prison, near the guard-house of the Immortals. You must manage that these flowers reach them, with a warm greeting from me, but mind, the message must be given with the flowers."

"But the guards will not allow me to see the prisoners."

"Take these rings, and slip them into their hands."

"I will do my best."

"I knew you loved me, my good Sabaces. Now make haste, and come back soon."

33. The bird of paradise is called in Persian Homaï. See Malcolm, *Persia*, *p*. 53.

The old man went off as fast as he could. Atossa looked thoughtfully after him, murmuring to herself: "Now they will both know, that I loved them to the last. The rose means, 'I love you,' and the evergreen cypress, 'true and steadfast.'" The old man came back in an hour; bringing her Bartja's favorite ring, and from Darius an Indian handkerchief dipped in blood.

Atossa ran to meet him; her eyes filled with tears as she took the tokens, and seating herself under a spreading plane-tree, she pressed them by turns to her lips, murmuring: "Bartja's ring means that he thinks of me; the blood-stained handkerchief that Darius is ready to shed his heart's blood for me."

Atossa smiled as she said this, and her tears, when she thought of her friends and their sad fate, were quieter, if not less bitter, than before.

A few hours later a messenger arrived from Crœsus with news that the innocence of Bartja and his friends had been proved, and that Nitetis was, to all intents and purposes, cleared also.

Kassandane sent at once to the hanging-gardens, with a request that Nitetis would come to her apartments. Atossa, as unbridled in her joy as in her grief, ran to meet her friend's litter and flew from one of her attendants to the other crying: "They are all innocent; we shall not lose one of them—not one!"

When at last the litter appeared and her loved one, pale as death, within it, she burst into loud sobs, threw her arms round Nitetis as she descended, and covered her with kisses and caresses till she perceived that her friend's strength was failing, that her knees gave way,

and she required a stronger support than Atossa's girlish strength could give.

The Egyptian girl was carried insensible into the queen-mother's apartments. When she opened her eyes, her head—more like a marble piece of sculpture than a living head—was resting on the blind queen's lap, she felt Atossa's warm kisses on her forehead, and Cambyses, who had obeyed his mother's call, was standing at her side.

She gazed on this circle, including all she loved best, with anxious, perplexed looks, and at last, recognizing them one by one, passed her hand across her pale forehead as if to remove a veil, smiled at each, and closed her eyes once more. She fancied Isis had sent her a beautiful vision, and wished to hold it fast with all the powers of her mind.

Then Atossa called her by her name, impetuously and lovingly. She opened her eyes again, and again she saw those loving looks that she fancied had only been sent her in a dream. Yes, that was her own Atossa—this her motherly friend, and there stood, not the angry king, but the man she loved. And now his lips opened too, his stern, severe eyes rested on her so beseechingly, and he said: "O Nitetis, awake! you must not—you cannot possibly be guilty!" She moved her head gently with a look of cheerful denial and a happy smile stole across her features, like a breeze of early spring over fresh young roses.

"She is innocent! by Mithras, it is impossible that she can be guilty," cried the king again, and forgetful of the presence of others, he sank on his knees.

A Persian physician came up and rubbed her forehead with a sweet-scented oil, and Nebenchari

approached, muttering spells, felt her pulse, shook his head, and administered a potion from his portable medicine-chest. This restored her to perfect consciousness; she raised herself with difficulty into a sitting posture, returned the loving caresses of her two friends, and then turning to Cambyses, asked: "How could you believe such a thing of me, my King?" There was no reproach in her tone, but deep sadness, and Cambyses answered softly, "Forgive me."

Kassandane's blind eyes expressed her gratitude for this self-renunciation on the part of her son, and she said: "My daughter, I need your forgiveness too."

"But *I* never once doubted you," cried Atossa, proudly and joyfully kissing her friend's lips.

"Your letter to Bartja shook my faith in your innocence," added Kassandane.

"And yet it was all so simple and natural," answered Nitetis. "Here, my mother, take this letter from Egypt. Crœsus will translate it for you. It will explain all. Perhaps I was imprudent. Ask your mother to tell you what you would wish to know, my King. Pray do not scorn my poor, ill sister. When an Egyptian girl once loves, she cannot forget. But I feel so frightened. The end must be near. The last hours have been so very, very terrible. That horrible man, Boges, read me the fearful sentence of death, and it was that which forced the poison into my hand. Ah, my heart!"

And with these words she fell back into the arms of Kassandane.

Nebenchari rushed forward, and gave her some more drops, exclaiming: "I thought so! She has taken poison and her life cannot be saved, though this antidote may possibly prolong it for a few days."

Cambyses stood by, pale and rigid, following the physician's slightest movements, and Atossa bathed her friend's forehead with her tears.

"Let some milk be brought," cried Nebenchari, "and my large medicine-chest; and let attendants be called to carry her away, for quiet is necessary, above all things."

Atossa hastened into the adjoining room; and Cambyses said to the physician, but without looking into his face: "Is there no hope?"

"The poison which she has taken results in certain death."

On hearing this the king pushed Nebenchari away from the sick girl, exclaiming: "She *shall* live. It is my will. Here, eunuch! summon all the physicians in Babylon—assemble the priests and Mobeds![34] She is not to die; do you hear? she must live, I am the king, and I command it."

Nitetis opened her eyes as if endeavoring to obey her lord. Her face was turned towards the window, and the bird of paradise with the gold chain on its foot, was still there, perched on the cypress-tree. Her eyes fell first on her lover, who had sunk down at her side and was pressing his burning lips to her right hand. She murmured with a smile: "O, this great happiness!" Then she saw the bird, and pointed to it with her left hand, crying: "Look, look, there is the Phœnix, the bird of Ra!"

After saying this she closed her eyes and was soon seized by a violent attack of fever.

34. Mobeds are priests. They are not mentioned in the Avesta. Spiegel derives the name from *nmâna paiti*. Rogge prefers, with Tiele, Haug's derivation from *magu pat*, Lord of the Magi.

CHAPTER VII.

PREXASPES, the king's messenger, and one of the highest officials at court, had brought Gaumata, Mandane's lover, whose likeness to Bartja was really most wonderful, to Babylon, sick and wounded as he was. He was now awaiting his sentence in a dungeon, while Boges, the man who had led him into crime, was nowhere to be found, notwithstanding all the efforts of the police. His escape had been rendered possible by the trap-door in the hanging-gardens, and greatly assisted by the enormous crowds assembled in the streets. Immense treasures were found in his house. Chests of gold and jewels, which his postion had enabled him to obtain with great ease, were restored to the royal treasury. Cambyses, however, would gladly have given ten times as much treasure to secure possession of the traitor.

To Phædime's despair the king ordered all the inhabitants of the harem, except his mother, Atossa and the dying Nitetis, to be removed to Susa, two days after the accused had been declared innocent. Several eunuchs of rank were deposed from their offices. The entire caste was to suffer for the sins of him who had escaped punishment.

Oropastes, who had already entered on his duties as regent of the kingdom, and had clearly proved his non-participation in the crime of which his brother had been proved guilty, bestowed the vacant places exclusively on the Magi. The demonstration made by the

people in favor of Bartja did not come to the king's ears until the crowd had long dispersed. Still, occupied as he was, almost entirely, by his anxiety for Nitetis, he caused exact information of this illegal manifestation to be furnished him, and ordered the ringleaders to be severely punished. He fancied it was a proof that Bartja had been trying to gain favor with the people, and Cambyses would perhaps have shown his displeasure by some open act, if a better impulse had not told him that he, not Bartja, was the brother who stood in need of forgiveness. In spite of this, however, he could not get rid of the feeling that Bartja, had been, though innocent,—the cause of the sad events which had just happened, nor of his wish to get him out of the way as far as might be; and he therefore gave a ready consent to his brother's wish to start at once for Naukratis.

Bartja took a tender farewell of his mother and sister, and started two days after his liberation. He was accompanied by Gyges, Zopyrus, and a numerous retinue charged with splendid presents from Cambyses for Sappho. Darius remained behind, kept back by his love for Atossa. The day too was not far distant, when, by his father's wish, he was to marry Artystone, the daughter of Gobryas.

Bartja parted from his friend with a heavy heart, advising him to be very prudent with regard to Atossa. The secret had been confided to Kassandane, and she had promised to take Darius' part with the king.

If any one might venture to raise his eyes to the daughter of Cyrus, assuredly it was the son of Hystaspes; he was closely connected by marriage with the royal family, belonged like Cambyses to the Pasargadæ,

and his family was a younger branch of the reigning dynasty.[35] His father called himself the highest noble in the realm, and as such, governed the province of Persia proper, the mother-country, to which this enormous world-empire and its ruler owed their origin. Should the family of Cyrus become extinct, the descendants of Hystaspes would have a well-grounded right to the Persian throne. Darius therefore, apart from his personal advantages, was a fitting claimant for Atossa's hand. And yet no one dared to ask the king's consent. In the gloomy state of mind into which he had been brought by the late events, it was likely that he might refuse it, and such an answer would have to be regarded as irrevocable. So Bartja was obliged to leave Persia in anxiety about the future of these two who were very dear to him.

Crœsus promised to act as mediator in this case also, and before Bartja left, made him acquainted with Phanes.

The youth had heard such a pleasant account of the Athenian from Sappho, that he met him with great cordiality, and soon won the fancy of the older and more experienced man, who gave him many a useful hint, and a letter to Theopompus, the Milesian, at Naukratis.[36] Phanes concluded by asking for a private interview.

35. In the inscription of Behistân there is a pedigree of the family of Darius, which can be reconciled with the one for which we are principally indebted to Herodotus. *Inscription of Behistân* I. §. II.

36. It is clear from different passages in the classics, that the ancient Greeks were accustomed to take introductions with them on their journeys. These consisted sometimes of letters, sometimes merely of the impression of a seal. Even as early as the Iliad, Glaukus mentions such a Symbolon. Compare Plutarch. *Artaxerxes*, XVIII., and especially Böckh, *Corp. Inscr.* I. p. 126. *Marmor. Oxon.* II. 24. In this inscription mention is made of the letter of recom-

Bartja returned to his friends looking grave and thoughtful; soon, however, he forgot his cause of anxiety and joked merrily with them over a farewell cup. Before he mounted his horse the next morning, Nebenchari asked to be allowed an audience. He was admitted, and begged Bartja to take the charge of a large written roll for king Amasis. It contained a detailed account of Nitetis' sufferings, ending with these words: "Thus the unhappy victim of your ambitious plans will end her life in a few hours by poison, to the use of which she was driven by despair. The arbitrary caprices of the mighty can efface all happiness from the life of a human creature, just as we wipe a picture from the tablet with a sponge. Your servant Nebenchari is pining in a foreign land, deprived of home and property, and the wretched daughter of a king of Egypt dies a miserable and lingering death by her own hand. Her body will be torn to pieces by dogs and vultures, after the manner of the Persians. Woe unto them who rob the innocent of happiness here and of rest beyond the grave!"

mendation or token (σύμβολα) which Strato, the king of Sidon, might give, say, to his ambassadors to Athens. A passport (σφραγίς) abroad is also spoken of in the Birds of Aristophanes 1212. This was provided with the government seal. The Lokrian seal bore the evening-star; the Samian a lyre, and so on. See Vol. I. note 286.

We will here insert the following letter, found by Passalaequa, with the seal still unbroken, in the wrappings of a mummy belonging to the time of the Ptolemies. It was addressed by a certain Timoxenes to Mosehion, introducing a man, whose name is destroyed, and who died on the journey before he could deliver it. The letter he carried was placed in his coffin. It runs as follows: "Timoxenes greets Moschion—M . . . . s, who will give you this letter, is the brother of Philon, Lysis' private secretary. See that no wrong is done him. His father is also here with Petonuris Second. These lines have been given him with the token of my family." This token consisted of a palette, similar to those used by the Egyptian scribes, to which the letter was fastened.

Bartja had not been told the contents of this letter, but promised to take it with him; he then, amid the joyful shouts of the people, set up outside the city-gate the stones which, according to a Persian superstition,[37] were to secure him a prosperous journey, and left Babylon.

Nebenchari, meanwhile, prepared to return to his post by Nitetis' dying-bed.

Just as he reached the brazen gates between the harem-gardens and the courts of the large palace, an old man in white robes came up to him. The sight seemed to fill Nebenchari with terror; he started as if the gaunt old man had been a ghost. Seeing, however, a friendly and familiar smile on the face of the other, he quickened his steps, and, holding out his hand with a heartiness for which none of his Persian acquaintances would have given him credit, exclaimed in Egyptian: "Can I believe my eyes? You in Persia, old Hib?* I should as soon have expected the sky to fall as to have the pleasure of seeing you on the Euphrates. But now, in the name of Osiris, tell me what can have induced you, you old ibis, to leave your warm nest on the Nile and set out on such a long journey eastward."

While Nebenchari was speaking, the old man listened in a bowing posture, with his arms hanging down by his side, and when he had finished, looked up into his face with indescribable joy, touched his breast with trembling fingers, and then, falling on the

37. This superstition prevails even to the present day. Morier. *Zweite Reise* in Bertuch's *neuer Bibliothek der Reisebeschreibungen*, See also de Wette, *Archäologie* §. 192.

* In ancient Egyptian Hib signifies an ibis. Many of the ancient Egyptians were called after the sacred animals.

right knee, laying one hand on his heart and raising the other to heaven, cried: "Thanks be unto thee, great Isis, for protecting the wanderer and permitting him to see his master once more in health and safety. Ah, child, how anxious I have been! I expected to find you as wasted and thin as a convict from the quarries; I thought you would have been grieving and unhappy, and here you are as well, and handsome and portly as ever. If poor old Hib had been in your place he would have been dead long ago."

"Yes, I don't doubt that, old fellow. I did not leave home of my own will either, nor without many a heartache. These foreigners are all the children of Seth.* The good and gracious gods are only to be found in Egypt on the shores of the sacred, blessed Nile."

"I don't know much about its being so blessed," muttered the old man.

"You frighten me, father Hib. What has happened then?"

"Happened! Things have come to a pretty pass there, and you'll hear of it soon enough. Do you think I should have left house and grandchildren at my age, —going on for eighty,—like any Greek or Phœnician vagabond, and come out among these godless foreigners (the gods blast and destroy them!), if I could possibly have staid on in Egypt?"

'But tell me what it's all about."

"Some other time, some other time. Now you must take me to your own house, and I won't stir out of it as long as we are in this land of Typhon."

The old man said this with so much emphasis, that

* See vol. I. note 147.

Nebenchari could not help smiling and saying: "Have they treated you so very badly then, old man?"

"Pestilence and Khamsin!"* blustered the old man. "There's not a more good-for-nothing Typhon's brood on the face of the earth than these Persians. I only wonder they're not all red-haired and leprous. Ah, child, two whole days I have been in this hell already, and all that time I was obliged to live among these blasphemers. They said no one could see you; you were never allowed to leave Nitetis' sick-bed. Poor child! I always said this marriage with a foreigner would come to no good, and it serves Amasis right if his children give him trouble. His conduct to you alone deserves that."

"For shame, old man!"

"Nonsense, one must speak one's mind sometimes. I hate a king, who comes from nobody knows where. Why, when he was a poor boy he used to steal your father's nuts, and wrench the name-plates off the house-doors. I saw he was a good-for-nothing fellow then. It's a shame that such people should be allowed to . . ."

"Gently, gently, old man. We are not all made of the same stuff, and if there was such a little difference between you and Amasis as boys, it is your own fault that, now you are old men, he has outstripped you so far."

"My father and grandfather were both servants in the temple, and of course I followed in their footsteps."[38]

38. The son was usually obliged to follow the same profession as his father. Diod. I. 74. Lepsius has discovered some remarkably

* The south-west wind, which does so much injury to the crops in the Nile valley. It is known to us as the Simoom, the wind so perilous to travellers in the desert.

"Quite right; it is the law of caste, and by that rule, Amasis ought never to have become anything higher than a poor army-captain at most."

"It is not every one who's got such an easy conscience as this upstart fellow."

"There you are again! For shame, Hib! As long as I can remember, and that is nearly half a century, every other word with you has been an abusive one. When I was a child your ill-temper was vented on me, and now the king has the benefit of it."

"Serves him right! Ah, if you only knew all! It's now seven months since . . ."

"I can't stop to listen to you now. At the rising of the seven stars I will send a slave to take you to my rooms. Till then you must stay in your present lodging, for I must go to my patient."

"You must?—Very well,—then go and leave poor old Hib here to die. I can't possibly live another hour among these creatures."

"What would you have me do then?"

"Let me live with you as long as we are in Persia."

"Have they treated you so very roughly?"

"I should think they had indeed. It is loathsome

long family pedigrees, in which every member belonged to the same calling. The genealogies appearing on the monuments, which recorded the names and titles of fathers, mothers, children, etc., have been recently collected and published by Lieblein, *Dictionnaire des noms hiéroglyphiques*. They have become important as a means of calculating the epochs of Egyptian history. But the castes among the Egyptians were not so rigidly circumscribed as in India, for we see from the monuments, that the son of a priest could enter the army, and vice versâ; that sons of the same father could devote themselves to different professions; and also (on which point we have favorable evidence in some hieratic manuscripts, the contents of which are of a didactic character) that young men were allowed to choose their own professions. Without question, however, it was more usual, and considered preferable, to remain in the father's calling. This indeed was the case among all ancient nations, not excepting the Greeks.

to think of. They forced me to eat out of the same pot with them and cut my bread with the same knife. An infamous Persian, who had lived many years in Egypt, and travelled here with us, had given them a list of all the things and actions, which we consider unclean.[39] They took away my knife when I was going to shave myself. A good-for-nothing wench kissed me on the forehead, before I could prevent it. There, you needn't laugh; it will be a month at least before I can get purified from all these pollutions. I took an emetic, and when that at last began to take effect, they all mocked and sneered at me. But that was not all. A cursed cook-boy nearly beat a sacred kitten to death before my very eyes. Then an ointment-mixer, who had heard that I was your servant, made that godless Bubares ask me whether I could cure diseases of the eye too. I said yes, because you know in sixty years it's rather hard if one can't pick up something from one's master. Bubares was interpreter between us, and the shameful fellow told him to say that he was very much disturbed about a dreadful disease in his eyes. I asked what it was, and received for answer that he could not tell one thing from another in the dark!"

"You should have told him that the best remedy for that was to light a candle."

"Oh, I hate the rascals! Another hour among them will be the death of me!"

"I am sure you behaved oddly enough among these foreigners," said Nebenchari smiling, "you must have made them laugh at you, for the Persians are

39. On the numerous methods of purification, by washing, shaving, purging, etc., see Herod. II. 37. 41. 47. 77. Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, 5. Genesis 41. and 43. Ebers, *Aegypten u. d. Bücher Mose's*, I. p. 350.

generally very polite, well-behaved people.[40] Try them again, only once. I shall be very glad to take you in this evening, but I can't possibly do it before."

"It is as I thought! He's altered too, like everybody else! Osiris is dead and Seth rules the world again."

"Farewell! When the seven stars rise, our old Ethiopian slave, Nebununf, will wait for you here."

"Nebununf, that old rogue? I never want to see him again."

"Yes, the very same."

"Hm—well it's a good thing, when people stay as they were. To be sure I know some people who can't say so much of themselves, and who instead of minding their own business, pretend to heal inward diseases, and when a faithful old servant . . ."

"Hold your tongue, and wait patiently till evening."

These last words were spoken seriously, and produced the desired impression. The old man made another obeisance, and before his master left him, said: "I came here under the protection of Phanes, the former commander of the Greek mercenaries. He wishes very much to speak with you."

"That is his concern. He can come to me."

"You never leave that sick girl, whose eyes are as sound as . . ."

"Hib!"

"For all I care she may have a cataract in both. May Phanes come to you this evening?"

"I wished to be alone with you."

"So did I; but the Greek seems to be in a great hurry, and he knows nearly everything that I have to tell you."

40. Herod. I. 134.

"Have you been gossiping then?"

"No—not exactly—but . . ."

"I always thought you were a man to be trusted."

"So I was. But this Greek knows already a great deal of what I know, and the rest . . ."

"Well?"

"The rest he got out of me, I hardly know how myself. If I did not wear this amulet against an evil eye, I should have been obliged . . ."

"Yes, yes, I know the Athenian—I can forgive you. I should like him to come with you this evening. But I see the sun is already high in the heavens. I have no time to lose. Tell me in a few words what has happened."

"I thought this evening . . ."

"No, I must have at least a general idea of what has happened before I see the Athenian. Be brief."

"You have been robbed!"

"Is that all?"

"Is not that enough?"

"Answer me. Is that all?"

"Yes!"

"Then farewell."

"But Nebenchari! . . ."

The physician did not even hear this exclamation; the gates of the harem had already closed behind him.

When the Pleiades had risen, Nebenchari was to be found seated alone in one of the magnificent rooms assigned to his use on the eastern side of the palace, near to Kassandane's apartments. The friendly manner in which he had welcomed his old servant had given

place to the serious expression which his face usually wore, and which had led the cheerful Persians to call him a morose and gloomy man.

Nebenchari was an Egyptian priest through and through; a member of that caste which never indulged in a jest, and never for a moment forgot to be dignified and solemn before the public; but when among their relations and their colleagues completely threw off this self-imposed restraint, and gave way at times even to exuberant mirth.

Though he had known Phanes in Sais, he received him with cold politeness, and, after the first greeting was ended, told Hib to leave them alone.

"I have come to you," said the Athenian, "to speak about some very important affairs."

"With which I am already acquainted," was the Egyptian's curt reply.

"I am inclined to doubt that," said Phanes with an incredulous smile.

"You have been driven out of Egypt, persecuted and insulted by Psamtik, and you have come to Persia to enlist Cambyses as an instrument of revenge against my country."

"You are mistaken. I have nothing against your country, but all the more against Amasis and his house.

"In Egypt the state and the king are one, as you very well know."

"On the contrary, my own observations have led me to think that the *priests* considered themselves one with the state."

"In that case you are better informed than I, who have always looked on the kings of Egypt as absolute.'

"So they are; but only in proportion as they know

how to emancipate themselves from the influence of your caste.—Amasis himself submits to the priests now."

"Strange intelligence!"

"With which, however, you have already long been made acquainted."

"Is that your opinion?"

"Certainly it is. And I know with still greater certainty that *once*—you hear me—*once*, he succeeded in bending the will of these rulers of his to his own."

"I very seldom hear news from home, and do not understand what you are speaking of."

"There I believe you, for if you knew what I meant and could stand there quietly without clenching your fist, you would be no better than a dog who only whimpers when he's kicked and licks the hand that torments him."

The physician turned pale. "I know that Amasis has injured and insulted me," he said, "but at the same time I must tell you that revenge is far too sweet a morsel to be shared with a stranger."

"Well said! As to my own revenge, however, I can only compare it to a vineyard where the grapes are so plentiful, that I am not able to gather them all myself."

"And you have come hither to hire good laborers."

"Quite right, and I do not even yet give up the hope of securing you to take a share in my vintage."

"You are mistaken. My work is already done. The gods themselves have taken it in hand. Amasis has been severely enough punished for banishing me from country, friends and pupils into this unclean land."

"You mean by his blindness perhaps?"

"Possibly."

"Then you have not heard that Petammon, one of your colleagues, has succeeded in cutting the skin, which covered the pupil of the eye and so restoring Amasis' sight?"

The Egyptian started and ground his teeth; recovered his presence of mind, however, in a moment, and answered: "Then the gods have punished the father through the children."

"In what way? Psamtik suits his father's present mood very well. It is true that Tachot is ill, but she prays and sacrifices with her father all the more for that; and as to Nitetis, you and I both know that her death will not touch him very closely."

"I really do not understand you."

"Of course not, so long as you fancy that I believe your beautiful patient to be Amasis' daughter."

The Egyptian started again, but Phanes went on without appearing to notice his emotion: "I know more than you suppose. Nitetis is the daughter of Hophra, Amasis' dethroned predecessor. Amasis brought her up as his own child—first, in order to make the Egyptians believe that Hophra had died childless; secondly, in order to deprive her of her rights to the throne; for you know women are allowed to govern on the Nile."[41]

"These are mere suppositions."

"For which, however, I can bring irrefragable proofs. Among the papers which your old servant Hib brought with him in a small box, there must be some letters

41. In the lists of kings of Egypt, the names of many queens occur who reigned in their own right, and these are corroborated by the monumental inscriptions. Lauth, indeed, in his Manetho, is of opinion that the divisions of the dynasties are connected with the reigns of the queens.

from a certain Sonnophre, a celebrated accoucheur,[42] your own father, which . . ."

"If that be the case, those letters are my property, and I have not the slightest intention of giving them up; besides which you might search Persia from one end to the other without finding any one who could decipher my father's writing."

"Pardon me, if I point out one or two errors into which you have fallen. First, this box is at present in my hands, and though I am generally accustomed to respect the rights of property, I must assure you that, in the present instance, I shall not return the box until its contents have served my purpose. Secondly, the gods have so ordained, that just at this moment there is a man in Babylon who can read every kind of writing known to the Egyptian priests. Do you perhaps happen to know the name of Onuphis?"

For the third time the Egyptian turned pale. "Are you certain," he said, "that this man is still among the living?"

"I spoke to him myself yesterday. He was formerly, you know, high-priest at Heliopolis, and was initiated into all your mysteries there. My wise countryman, Pythagoras of Samos, came to Egypt, and after

42. To judge from the pictures on the monuments and from the 1st Chap. of Exodus, it would seem that in ancient, as in modern Egypt, midwives were usually called in to assist at the birth of children; but it is also certain, that in difficult cases physicians were employed also. In the hieratic medical papyrus in Berlin, women are often spoken of as assisting at such times. In the medical Papyrus Ebers certain portions are devoted to diseases peculiar to women. There were special rooms set aside in private houses for the birth of children, as symbolical ones were reserved in the temples. These chambers were called *meschen*, and from them was derived the name given to midwives, *ta meschennu*.

submitting to some of your ceremonies,[43] was allowed to attend the lessons given in the schools for priests. His remarkable talents won the love of the great Onuphis and he taught him all the Egyptian mysteries,[44] which Pythagoras afterwards turned to account for the benefit of mankind. My delightful friend Rhodopis and I are proud of having been his pupils. When the rest

43. Iamblichus, *De vita Pythagorae*, II. p. 18. ed. Kiessl. Diod. I. 98. Plutarch, *Quaest. conv.* VIII. 8. 2. Onuphis is also called Oinuphis. In connection with this subject much is to be found in Röth, *Geschichte unserer abendländischen Philosophie.* It is a pity that this very clever book, which has been the result of such extended studies, should lose in value by the reckless boldness of its combinations.

44. Notwithstanding all the fables told about the Egyptian mysteries by the later Greek writers, especially the Neo-Platonists, we can get no clear idea of them. Much on this subject has been preserved in the papyri, but unfortunately whenever the mysterics are touched upon, the language of the priestly writers becomes so overburthened with metaphors and is made purposely so obscure, that it is very difficult to discover their meaning. The mysteries seem to have been the exclusive property of the priests, (see also Plut. *Isis and Osiris* 4-11.) and to have comprehended what was symbolized in the sacred ceremonies. The belief in one only god (as the Ritual of the Dead teaches also) seems to have been at the root of these mysteries, and they must have contained much that is noble and beautiful, as the wisest Greek philosophers, Lykurgus, Solon, Thales, Pythagoras, Demokritus, Plato, and many others, borrowed much from them in their teaching on political economy, geometry, astronomy and philosophy. Moses too owed many of his moral and sanitary laws to the acquaintance with these mysteries, which he made as pupil of the Egyptian priests. See Vol. I. note 251. A great deal of erudition has been spent by modern scholars on this subject, with but very small result; as, for instance, by I. G. Bremer, *Symbolische Weisheit der Aegypter*, &c.; R. Howard, *Revelations of Egyptian Mysteries;* F. Nork, *Andeutungen eines Systems der priesterlichen Mysteriosophie und Hierologie.* &c. A thorough understanding of the Ritual of the Dead, (already translated by Birch in his English translation of Bunsen's *Egypt's Place in the History of the World*), and the publication of the existing hieratic papyri, which, in the present advanced state of Egyptian philology, must soon be compelled to yield their secrets to earnest students, will in many ways clear up these mysteries of mysteries, if not do away with them entirely. Much has been already gained in this direction, especially from the inscriptions belonging to the times of the Ptolemies, the 1st, 17th and 125th chapters of the Ritual of the Dead, the Pantheistic text in the tombs of the kings and the temples of the oases, the book of Athem, and many manuscripts, whose text can be restored by comparison.

of your caste heard that Onuphis had betrayed the sacred mysteries, the ecclesiastical judges determined on his death. This was to be caused by a poison extracted from peach-kernels. The condemned man, however, heard of their machinations, and fled to Naukratis, where he found a safe asylum in the house of Rhodopis, whom he had heard highly praised by Pythagoras, and whose dwelling was rendered inviolable by the king's letter. Here he met Antimenidas the brother of the poet Alcæus* of Lesbos, who, having been banished by Pittakus, the wise ruler of Mitylene, had gone to Babylon, and there taken service in the army of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Assyria. Antimenidas gave him letters to the Chaldæans. Onuphis travelled to the Euphrates, settled there, and was obliged to seek for some means of earning his daily bread, as he had left Egypt a poor man. He is now supporting himself in his old age, by the assistance which his superior knowledge enables him to render the Chaldæans in their astronomical observations from the tower of Bel. Onuphis is nearly eighty, but his mind is as clear as ever, and when I saw him yesterday and asked him to help me, his eyes brightened as he promised to do so. Your father was one of his judges, but he bears you no malice and sends you a greeting."

Nebenchari's eyes were fixed thoughtfully on the ground during this tale. When Phanes had finished, he gave him a penetrating look and said: "Where are my papers?"

"They are in Onuphis' hands. He is looking among them for the document I want."

"I expected to hear that. Be so good as to tell me

* See vol. 1. note 15. (Alcæus).

what the box is like, which Hib thought proper to bring over to Persia?"

"It is a small ebony trunk, with an exquisitely-carved lid. In the centre is a winged beetle, and on the four corners . . ."

"That contains nothing but a few of my father's notices and memorandums," said Nebenchari, drawing a deep breath of relief.

"They will very likely be sufficient for my purpose. I do not know whether you have heard, that I stand as high as possible in Cambyses' favor."

"So much the better for you. I can assure you, however, that the papers which would have been most useful to you have all been left behind in Egypt."

"They were in a large chest made of sycamore-wood and painted in colors."

"How do you know that?"

"Because—now listen well to what I am going to say, Nebenchari—because I can tell you (I do n t swear, for our great master Pythagoras forbade oaths), that *this very chest*, with all it contained, was burnt in the gr.ve of the temple of Neith, in Sais, by order of the king"

Phanes spoke slowly, emphasizing every syllable, and the words seemed to strike the Egyptian like so many flashes of lightning. His quiet coolness and deliberation gave way to violent emotion; his cheeks glowed and his eyes flashed. But only for one single minute; then the strong emotion seemed to freeze, his burning cheeks grew pale. "You are trying to make me hate my friends, in order to gain me as your ally," he said, coldly and calmly. "I know you Greeks very well. You are so intriguing and artful, that there is no lie, no fraud, too base, if it will only help to gain your purpose."

"You judge me and my countrymen in true Egyptian fashion; that is, they are foreigners, and therefore *must* be bad men. But this time your suspicions happen to be misplaced. Send for old Hib; he will tell you whether I am right or not."

Nebenchari's face darkened, as Hib came into the room.

"Come nearer," said he in a commanding tone to the old man.

Hib obeyed with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Tell me, have you taken a bribe from this man? Yes or no? I must know the truth; it can influence my future for good or evil. You are an old and faithful servant, to whom I owe a great deal, and so I will forgive you if you were taken in by his artifices, but I must know the truth. I conjure you to tell me by the souls of your fathers gone to Osiris!"

The old man's sallow face turned ashy pale as he heard these words. He gulped and wheezed some time before he could find an answer, and at last, after choking down the tears which had forced their way to his eyes, said, in a half-angry, half-whining tone: "Didn't I say so? they've bewitched him, they've ruined him in this wicked land. Whatever a man would do himself, he thinks others are capable of. Aye, you may look as angry as you like; it matters but little to me. What can it matter indeed to an old man, who has served the same family faithfully and honestly for sixty years, if they call him at last a rogue, a knave, a traitor, nay even a murderer, if it should take their fancy."

And the scalding tears flowed down over the old man's cheeks, sorely against his will.

The easily-moved Phanes clapped him on the

shoulder and said, turning to Nebenchari: "Hib is a faithful fellow. I give you leave to call me a rascal, if he has taken one single obolus from me."

The physician did not need Phanes' assurance; he had known his old servant too well and too long not to be able to read his simple, open features, on which his innocence was written as clearly as in the pages of an open book. "I did not mean to reproach you, old Hib," he said kindly, coming up to him. "How can any one be so angry at a simple question?"

"Perhaps you expect me to be pleased at such a shameful suspicion?"

"No, not that; but at all events now you can tell me what has happened at our house since I left."

"A pretty story that is! Why only to think of it makes my mouth as bitter, as if I were chewing wormwood."

"You said I had been robbed."

"Yes indeed: no one was ever so robbed before. There would have been some comfort if the knaves had belonged to the thieves' caste,[45] for then we should have got the best part of our property back again, and should not after all have been worse off than many another; but when . . ."

45. The cunning son of the architect, who robbed the treasure-house of Rhampsinitus was, according to Herodotus, (II. 120), severely punished; but in Diod. I. 80. and Aul. Gell. XI. 18. we see that when thieves acknowledged themselves to the authorities to be such, they were not punished, though a strict watch was set over them. According to Diodorus, there was a president of the thieves' caste, from whom the stolen goods could be reclaimed on relinquishment of a fourth part of the same. This strange rule possibly owed its rise to the law, which compelled every Egyptian to appear once in each year before the authorities of his district and give an account of his means of subsistence. Those who made false statements were punished with death. Diod. I. 77. Thus no one who valued his life could escape the watchful eye of the police, and the thief sacrificed the best part of his gains in order to save his life.

"Keep to the point, for my time is limited."

"You need not tell me that; I see old Hib can't do anything right here in Persia. Well, be it so, you're master; you must give orders; I am only the servant, I must obey. I won't forget it. Well, as I was saying, it was just at the time when the great Persian embassy came over to Sais to fetch Nitetis, and made everybody stare at them as if they were monsters or prodigies, that this shameful thing happened. I was sitting on the mosquito-tower just as the sun was setting, playing with my little grandson, my Baner's* eldest boy—he's a fine strapping little lad now, wonderfully sharp and strong for his age. The rogue was just telling me how his father,—the Egyptians do that when their wives leave the children too much alone—had hidden his mother's shoes,[46] and I was laughing heartily, because my Baner won't let any of the little ones live with me, she always says I spoil them, and so I was glad she should have the trick played her—when all of a sudden there was such a loud knocking at the house-door, that I thought there must be a fire and let the child drop off my lap. Down the stairs I ran, three steps at a time, as fast as my long legs would carry me, and unbarred the door. Before I had time to ask them what they wanted, a whole crowd of temple-servants and policemen—there must have been at least fifteen of them—forced their

46. Plutarch writes that to walk barefoot in the streets was considered improper among the Egyptians. To make their wives domestic, therefore, the husbands hid their shoes. It was the women's duty, however, according to Herod. II. 35. to buy at market, which seems natural enough to us, but not at all so to the Greeks, as in their native country this duty was performed by the men.

* Baner signifies a palm-tree. Lepsius, *Denkm* IV. 74 c.

way into the house. Pichi,—you know, that impudent fellow from the temple of Neith,—pushed me back, barred the door inside and told the police to put me in fetters if I refused to obey him. Of course I got angry and did not use very civil words to them—you know that's my way when I'm put out—and what does that bit of a fellow do—by our god Thoth, the protector of knowledge who must know all, I'm speaking the truth—but order them to bind my hands, forbid me—me, old Hib—to speak, and then tell me that he had been told by the high-priest to order me five-and-twenty strokes, if I refused to do his bidding. He showed me the high-priest's ring, and so I knew there was nothing for it but to obey the villain, whether I would or no. And what was his modest demand? Why, nothing less than to give him all the written papers you had left behind. But old Hib is not quite so stupid as to let himself be caught in that way, though some people, who ought to know better, do fancy he can be bribed and is no better than the son of an ass. What did I do then? I pretended to be quite crushed into submission by the sight of the signet-ring, begged Pichi as politely as I could to unfasten my hands, and told him I would fetch the keys. They loosened the cords, I flew up the stairs five steps at a time, burst open the door of your sleeping-room, pushed my little grandson, who was standing by it, into the room and barred it within. Thanks to my long legs, the others were so far behind that I had time to get hold of the black box which you had told me to take so much care of, put it into the child's arms, lift him through the window on to the balcony which runs round the house towards the inner court, and tell him to put it at once into the pigeon-house. Then I opened the door

as if nothing had happened, told Pichi the child had had a knife in his mouth, and that that was the reason I had run upstairs in such a hurry, and had put him out on the balcony to punish him. That brother of a hippopotamus was easily taken in, and then he made me show him over the house. First they found the great sycamore-chest which you had told me to take great care of too, then the papyrus-rolls on your writing-table, and so by degrees every written paper in the house. They made no distinction, but put all together into the great chest and carried it downstairs; the little black box, however, lay safe enough in the pigeon-house. My grandchild is the sharpest boy in all Sais!

"When I saw them really carrying the chest down-stairs, all the anger I'd been trying so hard to keep down burst out again. I told the impudent fellows I would accuse them before the magistrates, nay, even before the king if necessary, and if those confounded Persians, who were having the city shown them, had not come up just then and made everybody stare at them, I could have roused the crowd to take my side. The same evening I went to my son-in-law—he is employed in the temple of Neith too, you know,—and begged him to make every effort to find out what had become of the papers. The good fellow has never forgotten the handsome dowry you gave my Baner when he married her, and in three days he came and told me he had seen your beautiful chest and all the rolls it contained burnt to ashes. I was so angry that I fell ill of the jaundice, but that did not hinder me from sending in a written accusation to the magistrates. The wretches,—I suppose only because they were priests too,—refused to take any notice of me or my complaint. Then I sent in a petition

to the king, and was turned away there too with the shameful threat, that I should be considered guilty of high treason if I mentioned the papers again. I valued my tongue too much to take any further steps,[47] but the ground burnt under my feet; I could not stay in Egypt, I wanted to see you, tell you what they had done to you, and call on you, who are more powerful than your poor servant, to revenge yourself. And besides, I wanted to see the black box safe in your hands, lest they should take that from me too. And so, old man as I am, with a sad heart I left my home and my grandchildren to go forth into this foreign Typhon's land. Ah, the little lad was too sharp! As I was kissing him, he said: 'Stay with us, grandfather. If the foreigners make you unclean, they won't let me kiss you any more.' Baner sends you a hearty greeting, and my son-in-law told me to say he had found out that Psamtik, the crown-prince, and your rival, Petammon, had been the sole causes of this execrable deed. I could not make up my mind to trust myself on that Typhon's sea, so I travelled with an Arabian trading caravan as far as Tadmor, the Phœnician palm-tree station in the wilderness,[48] and then on to

47. The Egyptian law decreed the cutting out of the tongue as punishment for high treason. Diod. I. 78.

48. Tadmor, afterwards called Palmyra, was probably built by Solomon, though the Arabian legends give it a still earlier date. Schultens. *Index geogr.* Solomon's attention, as a wise king and enterprising trader, was more likely directed to this oasis in the midst of the Syrian deserts as a resting-place for his caravans, than as a place of defence against the attacks of the Syrians and Arabians, as Winer imagines in the third edition of his *Biblischen Realwörterbuch*. Palmyra rose quickly from small beginnings to great splendor, and to this day travellers are astonished at the size and beauty of its ruins. See R. Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra*.—Carchemish on the Euphrates, famous for the battle between Necho and Nebuchadnezzar, Jerem. 46. 2.—the Circesium of later times—is named as the principal station on the road to Babylon by Palmyra. Josephus, *Ant.* VIII. 6. X. 6. Movers. *Das phönizische Altherthum*, II. 40. Ritter, *Erdkunde*, XI. *p.* 690. See also Maspero's treatise on this city.

Carchemish, on the Euphrates, with merchants from Sidon. The roads from Sardis and from Phœnicia meet there, and, as I was sitting very weary in the little wood before the station, a traveller arrived with the royal post-horses, and I saw at once that it was the former commander of the Greek mercenaries."

"And I," interrupted Phanes, "recognized just as soon in you, the longest and most quarrelsome old fellow that had ever come across my path. Oh, how often I've laughed to see you scolding the children, as they ran after you in the street whenever you appeared behind your master with the medicine-chest. The minute I saw you too I remembered a joke which the king once made in his own way, as you were both passing by. 'The old man,' he said, 'reminds me of a fierce old owl followed by a flight of small teazing birds, and Nebenchari looks as if he had a scolding wife, who will some day or other reward him for healing other people's eyes by scratching out his own!' "

"Shameful!" said the old man, and burst into a flood of execrations.

Nebenchari had been listening to his servant's tale in silence and thought. He had changed color from time to time and on hearing that the papers which had cost him so many nights of hard work had been burnt, his fists clenched and he shivered as if seized by biting frost.

Not one of his movements escaped the Athenian. He understood human nature; he knew that a jest is often much harder to bear than a grave affront, and therefore seized this opportunity to repeat the inconsiderate joke which Amasis had, it is true, allowed himself to make in one of his merry moods. Phanes had calculated rightly, and had the pleasure of seeing, that as he

uttered the last words Nebenchari pressed his hand on a rose which lay on the table before him, and crushed it to pieces. The Greek suppressed a smile of satisfaction, and did not even raise his eyes from the ground, but continued speaking: "Well, now we must bring the travelling adventures of good old Hib to a close. I invited him to share my carriage. At first he refused to sit on the same cushion with such a godless foreigner, as I am, gave in, however, at last, had a good opportunity at the last station of showing the world how many clever processes of manipulation he had learnt from you and your father, in his treatment of Oropastes' wounded brother; he reached Babylon at last safe and sound, and there, as we could not get sight of you, owing to the melancholy poisoning of your country-woman, I succeeded in obtaining him a lodging in the royal palace itself. The rest you know already."

Nebenchari bowed assent and gave Hib a sign to leave the room, which the old man obeyed, grumbling and scolding in a low tone as he departed. When the door had closed on him, Nebenchari, the man whose calling was to heal, drew nearer to the soldier Phanes, and said: "I am afraid we cannot be allies after all, Greek."

"Why not?"

"Because I fear, that your revenge will prove far too mild when compared with that which I feel bound to inflict."

"On that head there is no need for solicitude," answered the Athenian. "May I call you my ally then?"

"Yes," answered the other; "but only on one condition."

"And that is—?"

"That you will procure me an opportunity of seeing our vengeance with my own eyes."

"That is as much as to say you are willing to accompany Cambyses' army to Egypt?"

"Certainly I am; and when I see my enemies pining in disgrace and misery I will cry unto them, 'Ah ha, ye cowards, the poor despised and exiled physician, Nebenchari, has brought this wretchedness upon you!' Oh, my books, my books! They made up to me for my lost wife and child. Hundreds were to have learnt from them how to deliver the blind from the dark night in which he lives, and to preserve to the seeing the sweetest gift of the gods, the greatest beauty of the human countenance, the receptacle of light, the seeing eye. Now that my books are burnt I have lived in vain; the wretches have burnt me in burning my works. O my books, my books!" And he sobbed aloud in his agony. Phanes came up and took his hand, saying: "The Egyptians have struck you, my friend, but me they have maltreated and abused—thieves have broken into your granaries, but my hearth and home have been burnt to ashes by incendiaries. Do you know, man, what I have had to suffer at their hands? In persecuting me, and driving me out of Egypt, they only did what they had a right to do; by their law I was a condemned man; and I could have forgiven all they did to me personally, for I loved Amasis, as a man loves his friend. The wretch knew that, and yet he suffered them to commit a monstrous, an incredible act—an act that a man's brain refuses to take in. They stole like wolves by night into a helpless woman's house—they seized my children, a girl and boy, the pride, the joy and comfort of my homeless,

wandering life. And how think you, did they treat them? The girl they kept in confinement, on the pretext that by so doing they should prevent me from betraying Egypt to Cambyses. But the boy—my beautiful, gentle boy—my only son—has been murdered by Psamtik's orders, and possibly with the knowledge of Amasis. My heart was withered and shrunk with exile and sorrow, but I feel that it expands—it beats more joyfully now that there is a hope of vengeance."

Nebenchari's sullen but burning glance met the flashing eye of the Athenian as he finished his tale; he gave him his hand and said: "We are allies."

The Greek clasped the offered hand and answered: "Our first point now is to make sure of the king's favor."

"I will restore Kassandane's sight."

"Is that in your power?"

"The operation which removed Amasis' blindness was my own discovery. Petammon stole it from my burnt papers."

"Why did you not exert your skill earlier?"

"Because I am not accustomed to bestow presents on my enemies."

Phanes shuddered slightly at these words, recovered himself, however, in a moment, and said: "And I am certain of the king's favor too. The Massagetan envoys have gone home to-day; peace has been granted them and . . ."

While he was speaking the door was burst open and one of Kassandane's eunuchs rushed into the room crying: "The Princess Nitetis is dying! Follow me at once, there is not a moment to lose."

The physician made a parting sign to his confederate,

and followed the eunuch to the dying-bed of the royal bride.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE sun was already trying to break a path for his rays through the thick curtains, that closed the window of the sick-room, but Nebenchari had not moved from the Egyptian girl's bedside. Sometimes he felt her pulse, or spread sweet-scented ointments on her forehead or chest, and then he would sit gazing dreamily into vacancy. Nitetis seemed to have sunk into a deep sleep after an attack of convulsions. At the foot of her bed stood six Persian doctors, murmuring incantations under the orders of Nebenchari, whose superior science they acknowledged, and who was seated at the bed's head.

Every time he felt the sick girl's pulse he shrugged his shoulders, and the gesture was immediately imitated by his Persian colleagues. From time to time the curtain was lifted and a lovely head appeared, whose questioning blue eyes fixed at once on the physician, but were always dismissed with the same melancholy shrug. It was Atossa. Twice she had ventured into the room, stepping so lightly as hardly to touch the thick carpet of Milesian wool, had stolen to her friend's bedside and lightly kissed her forehead, on which the pearly dew of death was standing, but each time a severe and reproving glance from Nebenchari had sent her back again into the next room, where her mother Kassandane was lying, awaiting the end.

Cambyses had left the sick-room at sunrise, on see-

ing that Nitetis had fallen asleep; he flung himself on to his horse, and accompanied by Phanes, Prexaspes, Otanes, Darius, and a number of courtiers, only just aroused from their sleep, took a wild ride through the game-park. He knew by experience, that he could best overcome or forget any violent mental emotion when mounted on an unmanageable horse.

Nebenchari started on hearing the sound of horses' hoofs in the distance. In a waking dream he had seen Cambyses enter his native land at the head of immense hosts; he had seen its cities and temples on fire, and its gigantic pyramids crumbling to pieces under the powerful blows of his mighty hand. Women and children lay in the smouldering ruins, and plaintive cries arose from the tombs in which the very mummies moved like living beings; and all these—priests, warriors, women, and children—the living and the dead—all had uttered his,—Nebenchari's,—name, and had cursed him as a traitor to his country. A cold shiver struck to his heart; it beat more convulsively than the blood in the veins of the dying girl at his side. Again the curtain was raised; Atossa stole in once more and laid her hand on his shoulder. He started and awoke. Nebenchari had been sitting three days and nights with scarcely any intermission by this sick-bed, and such dreams were the natural consequence.

Atossa slipped back to her mother. Not a sound broke the sultry air of the sick-room, and Nebenchari's thoughts reverted to his dream. He told himself that he was on the point of becoming a traitor and a criminal, the visions he had just beheld passed before him again, but this time it was another, and a different one which gained the foremost place. The forms of Amasis,—

who had laughed at and exiled him,—of Psamtik and the priests,—who had burnt his works,—stood near him; they were heavily fettered and besought mercy at his hands. His lips moved, but this was not the place in which to utter the cruel words which rose to them. And then the stern man wiped away a tear as he remembered the long nights, in which he had sat with the reed in his hand, by the dull light of the lamp, carefully painting every sign of the fine hieratic character in which he committed his ideas and experience to writing. He had discovered remedies for many diseases of the eye, spoken of in the sacred books of Thoth and the writings of a famous old physician of Byblos as incurable, but, knowing that he should be accused of sacrilege by his colleagues, if he ventured on a correction or improvement of the sacred writings, he had entitled his work, "Additional writings on the treatment of diseases of the eye, by the great god Thoth,[49] newly discovered by the oculist Nebenchari."[50]

49. The discovery of nearly every science is attributed to the ibis-headed god Thoth, the writer or clerk of heaven, whom the Greeks compared to their god Hermes. (See Pietschmänn, *Hermes Trismegistos*, L. 1875.) He is second in rank to Osiris, the logos, the reason, whose counsels aid the creative power. Thoth, the "thrice greatest" (Trismegistos) was said to have written six books on the healing art, in which anatomy, the doctrine of disease, and the use of medicines are said to have been treated, besides diseases of the eye. The book on the use of medicine has been preserved to the present day in the Papyrus Ebers. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* VI. 260. See Iamblichus, *De Myst. Aegypt.* VI. 4. Isis also was glorified as a healing divinity and in later times Serapis. Diod. I. 25. Tacit. *Hist.* IV. 81,

50. In the writings of the ancient Egyptians which have come down to us, we read constantly of books and documents, which had been found under this or that statue of a god. This was certainly intended as a proof of their sanctity and divine authorship. It is true that in some works the name of the author is given; as for instance the Legend of the two brothers (Papyr. d'Orbiney) the author of which was named Anana. In the Papyrus Anastasi IV. seven other authors are named: Kagabu, Hora, Merapu, Bek en Ptah, Amen Mes, Sun-

He had resolved on bequeathing his works to the library at Thebes,[51] that his experience might be useful to his successors and bring forth fruit for the whole body of sufferers. This was to be his reward for the long nights which he had sacrificed to science—recognition after death, and fame for the caste to which he belonged. And there stood his old rival Petammon,

ro, and Mer Ptah. One of the hermetic books was devoted entirely to diseases of the eye, to which a large portion of the Papyrus Ebers was also allotted. The "book on the eyes" commences p. 56, line 1. The first prescription is for the alleviation of inflammation in the eye. Other remedies are given for watering of the eyes, blear-eyes, etc. Page 56, line 7 treats of iridectomy; page 57, lines 2-4 contains a remedy for contraction of the pupil; p. 57, lines 5-6 has a cure for white spots (albugo) in the eyes. Granulation, fatty matter in the visual organs, etc., are also mentioned. Page 63, line 8, gives a prescription for the eyes taken from the directions of a Semite from Byblos. It was in Alexandria too, in the third century B. C., that Herophilus of Chalcedon discovered and named the retina of the eye. In the Papyrus Ebers the physician Nebsecht and the priest Chui are mentioned.

51. The library of Thebes, which according to Diodorus bore the inscription ψυχῆς ἰατρεῖον, "place of healing for the soul," contained, according to Iamblichus, *De Myst. Aegypt.* VIII, 1., 20,000 hermetic or sacerdotal books. It was in the Ramesseum, which, according to Diodorus of Osymandyas, was erected to Rameses Miamun, ("the beloved of Ammon") of the monuments, in the fourteenth century B. C. Champollion discovered what must formerly have been the space occupied by the library in the ruins of the Ramesseum. At the entrance were representations of Thoth, the god of wisdom, and Safech, the goddess of history. Many of the hieratic papyri which we possess are dated from this library and it is often mentioned in the Egyptian books. Lepsius even discovered at Thebes the tombs of two of the librarians under Rameses Miamun. Their possessors were father and son, this office, like most others, having been hereditary. They were called "governors of the books," and "presidents of the books." See Lepsius, *Chronologie Einleitung, p.* 39. The libraries seem always to have belonged to the temples. At Dendera, Edfu, and especially at Philœ, the inscriptions state in which rooms of the temples the manuscripts were preserved. Thus in the Ritual of the Dead, 17. 47. 48. we read of the library of Osiris Seb; Galen speaks of a library belonging to the temple of Ptah at Memphis, where medical manuscripts had also been preserved. Gal. *De comp. med. sec. gen.* V. 2. and we know that there was one attached to the Serapeum at Alexandria. See Parthey's *Monograph, das Alexandrinische Museum.* Fr. Richtel, with the ingenuity peculiar to him, ascertained the number of works preserved in the Alexandrine library.

by the side of the crown-prince in the grove of Neith, and stirred the consuming fire, after having stolen his discovery of the operation of couching. Their malicious faces were tinged by the red glow of the flames, which rose with their spiteful laughter towards heaven, as if demanding vengeance. A little further off he saw in his dream Amasis receiving his father's letters from the hands of the high-priest. Scornful and mocking words were being uttered by the king; Neithotep looked exultant.—In these visions Nebenchari was so lost, that one of the Persian doctors was obliged to point out to him that his patient was awake. He nodded in reply, pointing to his own weary eyes with a smile, felt the sick girl's pulse, and asked her in Egyptian how she had slept.

"I do not know," she answered, in a voice that was hardly audible. "It seemed to me that I was asleep, and yet I saw and heard everything that had happened in the room. I felt so weak that I hardly knew whether I was awake or asleep. Has not Atossa been here several times?"

"Yes."

"And Cambyses stayed with Kassandane until sunrise; then he went out, mounted his horse Reksch, and rode into the game-park."

"How do you know that?"

"I saw it."

Nebenchari looked anxiously into the girl's shining eyes. She went on: "A great many dogs have been brought into the court behind this house."

"Probably the king has ordered a hunt, in order to deaden the pain which he feels at seeing you suffer."

"Oh, no. I know better what it means. Oropastes

taught me, that whenever a Persian dies dogs[52] are brought in, that the Divs may enter into them."

"But you are living, my mistress, and . . ."

"Oh, I know very well that I shall die. I knew that I had not many hours more to live, even if I had not seen how you and the other physicians shrugged your shoulders whenever you looked at me. That poison is deadly."

"You are speaking too much, my mistress, it will hurt you."

"Oh let me speak, Nebenchari! I must ask you to do something for me before I die."

"I am your servant."

"No, Nebenchari, you must be my friend and priest. You are not angry with me for having prayed to the Persian gods? Our own Hathor was always my best friend still. Yes, I see by your face that you forgive me. Then you must promise not to allow my corpse to be torn in pieces by dogs and vultures.* The thought is so very dreadful. You will promise to embalm my body and ornament it with amulets?"

"If the king allows."

"Of course he will. How could Cambyses possibly refuse my last request?"

"Then my skill is at your service."

"Thank you; but I have still something else to ask."

52. As soon as a Persian was dead, the *Drukhs Naçus*, or unclean demon of death, rushed to the spot in the form of a fly and seated himself on the corpse and on one of the living who were present, bringing destruction and taint. *Vendid.* Farg. VII. 2-24; Even to this day, the Parsees hold dogs before dying people. Ritter, *Erdkunde* IV. p. 1092. Possibly they do this in hopes that the spectre of death may enter into the animals; but the eyes of two especially spotted dogs were said to have the power of scaring the evil Drukhs. The latter remark is from the Dutch translator. See also Tiele, *Godsd. v. Zarath. p.* 184.

* See vol. I. note 110.

"You must be brief. My Persian colleagues are already making signs to me, to enjoin silence on you."

"Can't you send them away for a moment?"

"I will try to do so."

Nebenchari then went up and spoke to the Magi for a few minutes, and they left the room. An important incantation, at which no one but the two concerned might be present, and the application of a new and secret antidotal poison were the pretexts which he had used in order to get rid of them.

When they were alone, Nitetis drew a breath of relief and said: "Give me your priestly blessing on my long journey into the nether world, and prepare me for my pilgrimage to Osiris."

Nebenchari knelt down by her bed and in a low voice repeated hymns, Nitetis making devotional responses.

The physician represented Osiris, the lord of the nether world—Nitetis the soul, justifying itself before him.*

When these ceremonies were ended the sick girl breathed more freely. Nebenchari could not but feel moved in looking at this young suicide. He felt confident that he had saved a soul for the gods of his native land, had cheered the last sad and painful hours of one of God's good creatures. During these last moments, compassion and benevolence had excluded every bitter feeling; but when he remembered that this lovely creature owed all her misery to Amasis too, the old black cloud of thought darkened his mind again.—Nitetis, after lying silent for some time, turned to her new friend with a

* See vol. 1. note 251.

pleasant smile, and said: "I shall find mercy with the judges of the dead now, shall not I?"

"I hope and believe so."

"Perhaps I may find Tachot before the throne of Osiris, and my father . . ."

"Your father and mother are waiting for you there. Now in your last hour bless those who begot you, and curse those who have robbed you of your parents, your crown and your life."

"I do not understand you."

"Curse those who robbed you of your parents, crown and life, girl!" cried the physician again, rising to his full height, breathing hard as he said the words, and gazing down on the dying girl. "Curse those wretches, girl! that curse will do more in gaining mercy from the judges of the dead, than thousands of good works!" And as he said this he seized her hand and pressed it violently.

Nitetis looked up uneasily into his indignant face, and stammered in blind obedience, "I curse."

"Those who robbed my parents of their throne and lives!"

"Those who robbed my parents of their throne and their lives," she repeated after him, and then crying, "Oh, my heart!" sank back exhausted on the bed.

Nebenchari bent down, and before the royal physicians could return, kissed her forehead gently, murmuring: "She dies my confederate. The gods hearken to the prayers of those who die innocent. By carrying the sword into Egypt, I shall avenge king Hophra's wrongs as well as my own."

When Nitetis opened her eyes once more, a few hours later, Kassandane was holding her right hand, Atossa kneeling at her feet, and Crœsus standing at the

head of her bed, trying, with the failing strength of old age, to support the gigantic frame of the king, who was so completely overpowered by his grief, that he staggered like a drunken man. The dying girl's eyes lighted up as she looked round on this circle. She was wonderfully beautiful. Cambyses came closer and kissed her lips; they were growing cold in death. It was the first kiss he had ever given her,—and the last. Two large tears sprang to her eyes; their light was fast growing dim; she murmured Cambyses' name softly, fell back in Atossa's arms, and died.

We shall not give a detailed account of the next few hours: it would be an unpleasant task to describe how, at a signal from the principal Persian doctor, every one, except Nebenchari and Crœsus, hastily left the room;—how dogs were brought in and their sagacious heads turned towards the corpse in order to scare the demon of death;*—how, directly after Nitetis' death, Kassandane, Atossa and their entire retinue moved into another house in order to avoid defilement;—how fire was extinguished throughout the dwelling, that the pure element might be removed from the polluting spirits of death;[53] how spells and exorcisms were muttered,[54] and how every person and thing, which had approached or been brought into contact with the dead body, was subjected to numerous purifications with water and pungent fluids.

53. In winter fire might be brought back to the deceased's dwelling nine days after the death, in summer not until a month had passed. *Vendid.* Farg. V. 130.

54. The entire tenth Fargard of the Vendidad is devoted to these spells.

* See note 52.

The same evening Cambyses was seized by one of his old epileptic attacks. Two days later he gave Nebenchari permission to embalm Nitetis' body in the Egyptian manner, according to her last wish. The king gave way to the most immoderate grief; he tore the flesh of his arms, rent his clothes and strewed ashes on his head, and on his couch. All the magnates of his court were obliged to follow his example. The troops mounted guard with rent banners and muffled drums. The cymbals and kettle-drums of the "Immortals" were bound round with crape. The horses which Nitetis had used, as well as all which were then in use by the court, were colored blue and deprived of their tails; the entire court appeared in mourning robes of dark brown, rent to the girdle,* and the Magi were compelled to pray three days and nights unceasingly for the soul of the dead,[55] which was supposed to be awaiting its sentence for eternity at the bridge Chinvat** on the third night.

Neither the king, Kassandane, nor Atossa shrank from submitting to the necessary purifications; they repeated, as if for one of their nearest relations, thirty prayers for the dead, while, in a house outside the city gates, Nebenchari began to embalm her body in the most costly manner, and according to the strictest rules of his art.[56]

55. The number of prayers to be said according to the degrees of relationship with the deceased are to be found *Vendidad* Farg. XII. 1.

56. Embalming was practised in three different ways. The first cost a talent of silver (£225.); the second 20 Minæ (£60.) and the third was very inexpensive. Herod. II. 86-88. Diod. I. 91. The brain was first drawn out through the nose and the skull filled with spices. The intestines were then taken out, and the body filled in like manner with aromatic spices. When all was finished, the corpse was left 70 days in a solution of soda, and then wrapped in bandages of

* See note 29. ** See note 15.

For nine days Cambyses remained in a condition, which seemed little short of insanity. At times furious, at others dull and stupefied, he did not even allow his relations or the high-priest to approach him. On the morning of the tenth day he sent for the chief of the seven judges and commanded, that as lenient a sentence as possible should be pronounced on Gaumata. Nitetis, on her dying-bed, had begged him to spare the life of this unhappy youth.

One hour later the sentence was submitted to the king for ratification. It ran thus: "Victory to the king! Inasmuch as Cambyses, the eye of the world and the sun of righteousness, hath, in his great mercy, which is as broad as the heavens and as inexhaustible as the great deep, commanded us to punish the crime of the son of the Magi, Gaumata, with the indulgence of a mother instead of with the severity of a judge, we, the seven judges of the realm, have determined to grant his forfeited life. Inasmuch, however, as by the folly of this youth the lives of the noblest and best in this realm have been imperilled, and it may reasonably

byssus spread over with gum. The microscopical examinations of mummy-bandages made by Dr. Ure and Prof. Czermak have proved that byssus is linen, not cotton. The manner of embalming just described is the most expensive, and the latest chemical researches prove that the description given of it by the Greeks was tolerably correct. L. Penicher maintains that the bodies were first somewhat dried in ovens, and that then resin of the cedar-tree, or asphalte, was poured into every opening. *Traité sur les embaumements selon les anciens et les modernes*. Paris 1699. According to Herodotus, female corpses were embalmed by women. Herod. II. 89. The subject is treated in great detail by Pettigrew, *History of Egyptian Mummies*. *London*. 1834. Czermak's microscopical examinations of Egyptian mummies show how marvellously the smallest portions of the bodies were preserved, and confirm the statements of Herodotus on many points. The monuments also contain much information in regard to embalming, and we now know the purpose of nearly all the amulets placed with the dead.

be apprehended that he may again abuse the marvellous likeness to Bartja, the noble son of Cyrus, in which the gods have been pleased in their mercy to fashion his form and face, and thereby bring prejudice upon the pure and righteous, we have determined to disfigure him in such wise, that in the time to come it will be a light matter to discern between this, the most worthless subject of the realm, and him who is most worthy. We therefore, by the royal will and command, pronounce sentence, that both the ears of Gaumata be cut off, for the honor of the righteous and shame of the impure."

Cambyses confirmed this sentence at once, and it was excuted the same day.

Oropastes did not dare to intercede for his brother, though this ignominious punishment mortified his ambitious mind more than even a sentence of death could have done. As he was afraid that his own influence and consideration might suffer through this mutilated brother, he ordered him to leave Babylon at once for a country-house of his own on Mount Arakadris.[57]

During the few days which had just passed, a shabbily-dressed and closely-veiled woman had watched day and night at the great gate of the palace; neither the threats of the sentries nor the coarse jests of the palace-servants could drive her from her post. She never allowed one of the less important officials to pass without eagerly questioning him, first as to the state of the

57. This mountain is mentioned in the inscription of Behistân I. §. IX. With reference to Gaumata's punishment, the same which Herodotus says was inflicted on the pretended Smerdis, we would observe that even Persians of high rank were sometimes deprived of their ears. In the Behistân inscription (Spiegel p. 15 and 21.) the ears, tongue and nose of the man highest in rank among the rebels, Fravartis, (Phraortes) were cut off. Similar punishments are quoted by Brisson. *De regn Persar.* II. p. 334-5.

Egyptian Princess, and then what had become of Gaumata. When his sentence was told her as a good joke by a chattering lamp-lighter, she went off into the strangest excitement, and astonished the poor man so much by kissing his robe, that he thought she must be crazed, and gave her an alms. She refused the money, but remained at her post, subsisting on the bread which was given her by the compassionate distributors of food. Three days later Gaumata himself, with his head bound up, was driven out in a closed *harmamaxa*. She rushed to the carriage and ran screaming by the side of it, until the driver stopped his mules and asked what she wanted. She threw back her veil and showed the poor, suffering youth her pretty face covered with deep blushes. Gaumata uttered a low cry as he recognized her, collected himself, however, in a moment, and said: "What do you want with me, Mandane?"

The wretched girl raised her hands beseechingly to him, crying: "Oh, do not leave me, Gaumata! Take me with you! I forgive you all the misery you have brought on me and my poor mistress. I love you so much, I will take care of you and nurse you as if I were the lowest servant-girl."

A short struggle passed in Gaumata's mind. He was just going to open the carriage-door and clasp Mandane—his earliest love—in his arms, when the sound of horses' hoofs coming nearer struck on his ear, and looking round he saw a carriage full of Magi, among whom were several who had been his companions at the school for priests. He felt ashamed and afraid of being seen by the very youths, whom he had often treated proudly and haughtily because he was the brother of the high-priest, threw Mandane a purse of gold, which his brother

had given him at parting, and ordered the driver to go on as fast as possible. The mules galloped off. Mandane kicked the purse away, rushed after the carriage and clung to it firmly. One of the wheels caught her dress and dragged her down. With the strength of despair she sprang up, ran after the mules, overtook them on a slight ascent which had lessened their speed, and seized the reins. The driver used his three-lashed whip, or scourge, the creatures reared, pulled the girl down and rushed on. Her last cry of agony pierced the wounds of the mutilated man like a sharp lance-thrust.

On the twelfth day after Nitetis' death Cambyses went out hunting, in the hope that the danger and excitement of the sport might divert his mind. The magnates and men of high rank at his court received him with thunders of applause, for which he returned cordial thanks. These few days of grief had worked a great change in a man so unaccustomed to suffering as Cambyses. His face was pale, his raven-black hair and beard had grown grey, and the consciousness of victory which usually shone in his eyes was dimmed. Had he not, only too painfully, experienced that there was a stronger will than his own, and that, easily as he could destroy, it did not lie in his power to preserve the life of the meanest creature? Before starting, Cambyses mustered his troop of sportsmen, and calling Gobryas, asked why Phanes was not there.

"My King did not order . . ."

"He is my guest and companion, once for all; call him and follow us."

Gobryas bowed, dashed back to the palace, and in

half an hour reappeared among the royal retinue with Phanes.

The Athenian was warmly welcomed by many of the group, a fact which seems strange when we remember that courtiers are of all men the most prone to envy, and a royal favorite always the most likely object to excite their ill will. But Phanes seemed a rare exception to this rule. He had met the Achæmenidæ in so frank and winning a manner, had excited so many hopes by the hints he had thrown out of an expected and important war, and had aroused so much merriment by well-told jests, such as the Persians had never heard before, that there were very few who did not welcome his appearance gladly, and when—in company with the king—he separated from the rest in chase of a wild ass, they openly confessed to one another, that they had never before seen so perfect a man. The clever way in which he had brought the innocence of the accused to light, the finesse which he had shown in securing the king's favor, and the ease with which he had learnt the Persian language in so short a time, were all subjects of admiration. Neither was there one even of the Achæmenidæ themselves, who exceeded him in beauty of face or symmetry of figure. In the chase he proved himself a perfect horseman, and in a conflict with a bear an exceptionally courageous and skilful sportsman. On the way home, as the courtiers were extolling all the wonderful qualities possessed by the king's favorite, old Araspes exclaimed, "I quite agree with you that this Greek, who by the way has proved himself a better soldier than anything else, is no common man, but I am sure you would not praise him half as much, if he were not a foreigner and a novelty."

Phanes happened to be only separated from the speaker by some thick bushes, and heard these words. When the other had finished, he went up and said, smiling: "I understood what you said and feel obliged to you for your kind opinion. The last sentence, however, gave me even more pleasure than the first, because it confirmed my own idea that the Persians are the most generous people in the world—they praise the virtues of other nations as much, or even more, than their own."

His hearers smiled, well pleased at this flattering remark, and Phanes went on: "How different the Jews are now, for instance! They fancy themselves the exclusive favorites of the gods, and by so doing incur the contempt of all wise men, and the hatred of the whole world. And then the Egyptians! You have no idea of the perversity of that people. Why, if the priests could have their way entirely, (and they have a great deal of power in their hands) not a foreigner would be left alive in Egypt, nor a single stranger allowed to enter the country. A true Egyptian would rather starve, than eat out of the same dish with one of us. There are more strange, astonishing and wonderful things to be seen in that country than anywhere else in the world. And yet, to do it justice, I must say that Egypt has been well spoken of as the richest and most highly cultivated land under the sun. The man who possesses that kingdom need not envy the very gods themselves. It would be mere child's play to conquer that beautiful country. Ten years there gave me a perfect insight into the condition of things, and I know that their entire military caste would not be sufficient to resist one such troop as your Immortals. Well, who

knows what the future may bring! Perhaps we may all make a little trip together to the Nile some day. In my opinion, your good swords have been rather long idle."

These well-calculated words were received with such shouts of applause, that the king turned his horse to enquire the cause. Phanes answered quickly that the Achæmenidæ were rejoicing in the thought that a war might possibly be near at hand.

"What war?" asked the king, with the first smile that had been seen on his face for many days.

"We were only speaking in general of the possibility of such a thing," answered Phanes carelessly; then, riding up to the king's side, his voice took an impressive tone full of feeling, and looking earnestly into his face, he began: "It is true, my Sovereign, that I was not born in this beautiful country as one of your subjects, nor can I boast of a long acquaintance with the most powerful of monarchs, but yet I cannot resist the presumptuous, perhaps criminal thought, that the gods at my birth appointed me to be your real friend. It is not your rich gifts that have drawn me to you. I did not need them, for I belong to the wealthier class of my countrymen, and I have no son,—no heir,—to whom I can bequeath my treasures. Once I had a boy—a beautiful, gentle child; . . but I was not going to speak of that,—I . . . Are you offended at my freedom of speech, my Sovereign?"

"What is there to offend me?" answered the king, who had never been spoken to in this manner before, and felt strongly attracted to the original foreigner.

"Till to-day I felt that your grief was too sacred to be disturbed, but now the time has come to rouse you from it and to make your heart glow once more.

You will have to hear what must be very painful to you."

"There is nothing more now, that can grieve me."

"What I am going to tell you will not give you pain; on the contrary, it will rouse your anger."

"You make me curious."

"You have been shamefully deceived; you and that lovely creature, who died such an early death a few days ago."

Cambyses' eyes flashed a demand for further information.

"Amasis, the King of Egypt, has dared to make sport of you, the lord of the world. That gentle girl was not his daughter, though she herself believed that she was; she . . ."

"Impossible!"

"It would seem so, and yet I am speaking the simple truth. Amasis spun a web of lies, in which he managed to entrap, not only the whole world, but you too, my Sovereign. Nitetis, the most lovely creature ever born of woman, was the daughter of a king, but not of the usurper Amasis. Hophra, the rightful king of Egypt, was the father of this pearl among women. You may well frown, my Sovereign. It is a cruel thing to be betrayed by one's friends and allies."

Cambyses spurred his horse, and after a silence of some moments, kept by Phanes purposely, that his words might make a deeper impression, cried, "Tell me more! I wish to know everything."

"Hophra had been living twenty years[58] in easy

58. According to Herodotus, II. 169. Amasis treated his dethroned predecessor with great lenity, and spared his life until the Egyptians fell upon him and hung him. On account of Nitetis' age, we are obliged to allow Hophra twenty years of life after his dethrone-

captivity in Sais after his dethronement, when his wife, who had borne him three children and buried them all, felt that she was about to give birth to a fourth. Hophra, in his joy, determined to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving in the temple of Pacht,* the Egyptian goddess supposed to confer the blessing of children, when, on his way thither, a former magnate of his court, named Patarbemis,[59] whom, in a fit of unjust anger, he had ignominiously mutilated, fell upon him with a troop of slaves and massacred him. Amasis had the unhappy widow brought to his palace at once, and assigned her an apartment next to the one occupied by his own queen Ladice, who was also expecting soon to give birth to a child. A girl was born to Hophra's widow, but the mother died in the same hour, and two days later Ladice bore a child also.—But I see we are in the court of the palace. If you allow, I will have the report of the physician, by whom this imposture was effected, read before you. Several of his notes have, by a remarkable conjuncture of circumstances, which I will explain to you later, fallen into my hands. A former high-priest of Heliopolis, Onuphis, is now living in Babylon, and understands all the different styles of writing in use among his countrymen.[60] Nebenchari will, of course,

ment. It is the only way in which we can rescue Herodotus' narrative, which forms the basis of our tale. Amasis would scarcely have dared to send Cambyses a bride of forty; for it must be remembered that on the Nile a woman of forty is older than one of sixty in Europe. This subject has already been mentioned in our preface.

59. Herod. II. 162.

60. The three Egyptian styles of writing existed already at the time of Amasis, though the demotic or popular style used for correspondence, does not seem much older than the dynasty to which he belonged, (the 26th).

* See vol. I. note 53.

refuse to help in disclosing an imposture, which must inevitably lead to the ruin of his country."

"In an hour I expect to see you here with the man you have just spoken of. Crœsus, Nebenchari, and all the Achæmenidæ who were in Egypt, will have to appear also. I must have certainty before I can act, and your testimony alone is not sufficient, because I know from Amasis, that you have cause to feel a grudge against his house."

At the time appointed all were assembled before the king in obedience to his command.

Onuphis, the former high-priest, was an old man of eighty. A pair of large, clear, intelligent, grey eyes looked out of a head so worn and wasted, as to be more like a mere skull than the head of a living man. He held a large papyrus-roll in his gaunt hand, and was seated in an easy chair, as his paralyzed limbs did not allow of his standing, even in the king's presence. His dress was snow-white, as beseemed a priest, but there were patches and rents to be seen here and there. His figure might perhaps once have been tall and slender, but it was now so bent and shrunk by age, privation and suffering, as to look unnatural and dwarfish, in comparison with the size of his head.

Nebenchari, who revered Onuphis, not only as a high-priest deeply initiated in the most solemn mysteries, but also on account of his great age,[61] stood by his side and arranged his cushions. At his left stood Phanes, and then Crœsus, Darius and Prexaspes.

The king sat upon his throne. His face was dark

61. Among the Egyptians it was a sacred duty to honor the aged. Herod. II. 80. Cicero, *De Senectute*, 18. The Egyptian remains testify to the same. In the Prisse Papyrus, the fifth commandment of the Mosaic law exists, even including the annexed promise.

and stern as he broke the silence with the following words: "This noble Greek, who, I am inclined to believe, is my friend, has brought me strange tidings. He says that I have been basely deceived by Amasis,—that my deceased wife was not his, but his predecessor's daughter."

A murmur of astonishment ran through the assembly.

"This old man is here to prove the imposture."

Onuphis gave a sign of assent.

"Prexaspes, my first question is to you. When Nitetis was entrusted to your care, was it expressly said that she was the daughter of Amasis?"

"Expressly. Nebenchari had, it is true, praised Tachot to the noble Kassandane as the most beautiful of the twin sisters; but Amasis insisted on sending Nitetis to Persia. I imagined that, by confiding his most precious jewel to your care, he meant to put you under a special obligation; and as it seemed to me that Nitetis surpassed her sister, not only in beauty but in dignity of character, I ceased to sue for the hand of Tachot. In his letter to you too, as you will remember, he spoke of confiding to you his most beautiful, his dearest child."

"Those were his words."

"And Nitetis was, without question, the more beautiful and the nobler of the two sisters," said Crœsus in confirmation of the envoy's remark. "But it certainly did strike me that Tachot was her royal parents' favorite."

"Yes," said Darius, "without doubt. Once, at a revel, Amasis joked Bartja in these words: 'Don't look too deep into Tachot's eyes, for if you were a god, I could not allow you to take her to Persia!' Psamtik

was evidently annoyed at this remark and said to the king, 'Father, remember Phanes,'"

"Phanes!"

"Yes, my Sovereign," answered the Athenian. "Once, when he was intoxicated, Amasis let out his secret to me, and Psamtik was warning him not to forget himself a second time."

"Tell the story as it occurred."

"On my return from Cyprus to Sais as a conqueror, a great entertainment was given at court. Amasis distinguished me in every way, as having won a rich province for him, and even, to the dismay of his own countrymen, embraced me. His affection increased with his intoxication, and at last, as Psamtik and I were leading him to his private apartments, he stopped at the door of his daughter's room, and said: "The girls sleep there. If you will put away your own wife, Athenian, I will give you Nitetis. I should like to have you for a son-in-law. There's a secret about that girl, Phanes; she's not my own child.' Before his drunken father could say more, Psamtik laid his hand before his mouth, and sent me roughly away to my lodging, where I thought the matter over and conjectured what I now, from reliable sources, know to be the truth. I entreat you, command this old man to translate those parts of the physician Sonnophre's journal, which allude to this story."

Cambyses nodded his consent, and the old man began to read in a voice far louder than any one could have supposed possible from his infirm appearance: "On the fifth day of the month Thoth,[62] I was sent for

62. The month of Thoth or Taut lasted from August 29 till September 27. The 5th of Thoth was therefore equal to our 2nd of September.

by the king. I had expected this, as the queen was near her confinement. With my assistance she was easily and safely delivered of a child—a weakly girl. As soon as the nurse had taken charge of this child, Amasis led me behind a curtain which ran across his wife's sleeping-apartment. There lay another infant, which I recognized as the child of Hophra's widow, who herself had died under my hands on the third day of the same month. The king then said, pointing to this strong child, 'This little creature has no parents, but, as it is written in the law that we are to show mercy to the desolate orphans,[63] Ladice and I have determined to bring her up as our own daughter. We do not, however, wish that this deed should be made known, either to the world or to the child herself, and I ask you to keep the secret and spread a report that Ladice has given birth to twins. If you accomplish this according to our wish, you shall receive to-day five thousand rings of gold,* and the fifth part of this sum yearly, during your life.' I made my obeisance in silence, ordered every one to leave the sick room, and, when I again called them in, announced that Ladice had given birth to a second girl. Amasis' real child received the name of Tachot,—the spurious one was called Nitetis."

At these words Cambyses rose from his seat, and strode through the hall; but Onuphis continued, with-

63. We gather, not only from the Ritual of the Dead, but from many others of the Egyptian documents, that charity, especially towards widows and orphans, was commanded by their religion. Thus, for instance, a governor of high rank boasts on his tomb at Beni-hassan (Lepsius, *Denkmäler* II. Vol. 22.) that he has never injured a weak child (orphan is perhaps meant) nor done evil to a widow.

* See vol. I. note 172.

out allowing himself to be disturbed: "Sixth day of the month Thoth. This morning I had just lain down to rest after the fatigues of the night, when a servant appeared with the promised gold and a letter from the king, asking me to procure a dead child, to be buried with great ceremony as the deceased daughter of King Hophra. After a great deal of trouble I succeeded, an hour ago, in obtaining one from a poor girl who had given birth to a child secretly in the house of the old woman, who lives at the entrance to the City of the Dead. The little one had caused her shame and sorrow enough, but she would not be persuaded to give up the body of her darling, until I promised that it should be embalmed and buried in the most splendid manner. We put the little corpse into my large medicine-chest, my son Nebenchari carried it this time instead of my servant Hib, and so it was introduced into the room where Hophra's widow had died. The poor girl's baby will receive a magnificent funeral. I wish I might venture to tell her, what a glorious lot awaits her darling after death. Nebenchari has just been sent for by the king."

At the second mention of this name, Cambyses stopped in his walk, and said: "Is our oculist Nebenchari the man whose name is mentioned in this manuscript?"

"Nebenchari," returned Phanes, "is the son of this very Sonnophre who changed the children."

The physician did not raise his eyes; his face was gloomy and sullen.

Cambyses took the roll of papyrus out of Onuphis' hand, looked at the characters with which it was covered, shook his head, went up to Nebenchari and said:

"Look at these characters and tell me if it is your father's writing."

Nebenchari fell on his knees and raised his hands.

"I ask, did your father paint these signs?"

"I do not know—whether . . . Indeed . . ."

"I will know the truth. Yes or no?"

"Yes, my King; but . . ."

"Rise, and be assured of my favor. Faithfulness to his ruler is the ornament of a subject; but do not forget that I am your king now. Kassandane tells me, that you are going to undertake a delicate operation to-morrow in order to restore her sight. Are you not venturing too much?"

"I can depend on my own skill, my Sovereign."

"One more question. Did you know of this fraud?"

"Yes."

"And you allowed me to remain in error?"

"I had been compelled to swear secrecy, and an oath . . ."

"An oath is sacred. Gobryas, see that both these Egyptians receive a portion from my table. Old man, you seem to require better food."

"I need nothing beyond air to breathe, a morsel of bread and a draught of water to preserve me from dying of hunger and thirst, a clean robe, that I may be pleasing in the eyes of the gods and in my own, and a small chamber for myself, that I may be a hindrance to no man. I have never been richer than to-day."

"How so?"

"I am about to give away a kingdom."

"You speak in enigmas."

"By my translation of to-day I have proved, that your deceased consort was the child of Hophra. Now,

our law allows the daughter of a king to succeed to the throne, when there is neither son nor brother* living; if she should die childless, her husband becomes her legitimate successor. Amasis is a usurper, but the throne of Egypt is the lawful birthright of Hophra and his descendants. Psamtik forfeits every right to the crown the moment that a brother, son, daughter or son-in-law of Hophra appears. I can, therefore, salute my present sovereign as the future monarch of my own beautiful native land."

Cambyses smiled self-complacently, and Onuphis went on: "I have read in the stars too, that Psamtik's ruin and your own accession to the throne of Egypt have been fore-ordained."

"We'll show that the stars were right," cried the king, "and as for you, you liberal old fellow, I command you to ask me any wish you like."

"Give me a conveyance, and let me follow your army to Egypt. I long to close my eyes on the Nile."

"Your wish is granted. Now, my friends, leave me, and see that all those who usually eat at my table are present at this evening's revel. We will hold a council of war over the luscious wine. Methinks a campaign in Egypt will pay better than a contest with the Massagetæ."

He was answered by a joyful shout of "Victory to the king!" They all then left the hall, and Cambyses, summoning his dressers, proceeded for the first time to exchange his mourning garments for the splendid royal robes.

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* See note 41.

Crœsus and Phanes went into the green and pleasant garden lying on the eastern side of the royal palace, which abounded in groves of trees, shrubberies, fountains and flower-beds. Phanes was radiant with delight; Crœsus full of care and thought.

"Have you duly reflected," said the latter, "on the burning brand that you have just flung out into the world?"

"It is only children and fools that act without reflection," was the answer.

"You forget those who are deluded by passion."

"I do not belong to that number."

"And yet revenge is the most fearful of all the passions."

"Only when it is practised in the heat of feeling. My revenge is as cool as this piece of iron; but I know my duty."

"The highest duty of a good man, is to subordinate his own welfare to that of his country."

"That I know."

"You seem to forget, however, that with Egypt you are delivering your own country over to the Persians."

"I do not agree with you there."

"Do you believe, that when all the rest of the Mediterranean coasts belong to Persia, she will leave your beautiful Greece untouched?"

"Certainly not, but I know my own countrymen; I believe them fully capable of a victorious resistance to the hosts of the barbarians, and am confident that their courage and greatness will rise with the nearness of the danger. It will unite our divided tribes into one great nation, and be the ruin of the tyrants."

"I cannot argue with you, for I am no longer

acquainted with the state of things in your native country, and besides, I believe you to be a wise man—not one who would plunge a nation into ruin merely for the gratification of his own ambition. It is a fearful thing that entire nations should have to suffer for the guilt of one man, if that man be one who wears a crown. And now, if my opinion is of any importance to you, tell me what the deed was which has roused your desire of vengeance."

"Listen then, and never try again to turn me from my purpose. You know the heir to the Egyptian throne, and you know Rhodopis too. The former was, for many reasons, my mortal enemy, the latter the friend of every Greek, but mine especially. When I was obliged to leave Egypt, Psamtik threatened me with his vengeance; your son Gyges saved my life. A few weeks later my two children came to Naukratis, in order to follow me out to Sigeum. Rhodopis took them kindly under her protection, but some wretch had discovered the secret and betrayed it to the prince. The very next night her house was surrounded and searched, —my children found and taken captive. Amasis had meanwhile become blind, and allowed his miserable son to do what he liked; the wretch dared to . . ."

"Kill your only son?"

"You have said it."

"And your other child?"

"The girl is still in their hands."

"They will do her an injury when they hear . . ."

"Let her die. Better go to one's grave childless, than unrevenged."

"I understand. I cannot blame you any longer. The boy's blood must be revenged."

And so saying, the old man pressed the Athenian's right hand. The latter dried his tears, mastered his emotion, and cried: "Let us go to the council of war now. No one can be so thankful for Psamtik's infamous deeds as Cambyses. That man with his hasty passions was never made to be a prince of peace."

"And yet it seems to me the highest duty of a king is to work for the inner welfare of his kingdom. But human beings are strange creatures; they praise their butchers more than their benefactors. How many poems have been written on Achilles! but did any one ever dream of writing songs on the wise government of Pittakus?"*

"More courage is required to shed blood, than to plant trees."

"But much more kindness and wisdom to heal wounds, than to make them.—I have still one question which I should very much like to ask you, before we go into the hall. Will Bartja be able to stay at Naukratis when Amasis is aware of the king's intentions?"

"Certainly not. I have prepared him for this, and advised his assuming a disguise and a false name."

"Did he agree?"

"He seemed willing to follow my advice."

"But at all events it would be well to send a messenger to put him on his guard."

"We will ask the king's permission."

"Now we must go. I see the wagons containing the viands of the royal household just driving away from the kitchen."

"How many people are maintained from the king's table daily?"

* See vol. I. notes 15, 16.

"About fifteen thousand."[64]

"Then the Persians may thank the gods, that their king only takes one meal a day."

CHAPTER IX.

Six weeks after these events a little troop of horsemen might have been seen riding towards the gates of Sardis.

The horses and their riders were covered with sweat and dust. The former knew that they were drawing near a town, where there would be stables and mangers, and exerted all their remaining powers; but yet their pace did not seem nearly fast enough to satisfy the impatience of two men, dressed in Persian costume, who rode at the head of the troop.

The well-kept royal road ran through fields of good black, arable land, planted with trees of many different kinds. It crossed the outlying spurs of the Tmolus range of mountains. At their foot stretched rows of olive, citron and plane-trees, plantations of mulberries and vines; at a higher level grew firs, cypresses and nut-tree copses. Fig-trees and date-palms, covered with fruit, stood sprinkled over the fields; and the woods and meadows were carpeted with brightly-colored and sweetly-scented flowers. The road led over ravines and brooks, now half dried up by the heat of summer, and here and there the traveller came upon a well at the side of the road, carefully enclosed, with seats for the weary, and sheltering shrubs. Oleanders bloomed in the more

64. This immense royal household is said to have cost 400 talents, that is £90,000, daily. Athenæus, *Deipn. p.* 607.

damp and shady places; slender palms waved wherever the sun was hottest. Over this rich landscape hung a deep blue, perfectly cloudless sky, bounded on its southern horizon by the snowy peaks of the Tmolus mountains, and on the west by the Sipylus range of hills, which gave a bluish shimmer in the distance.

The road went down into the valley, passing through a little wood of birches, the stems of which, up to the very tree-top, were twined with vines covered with bunches of grapes.

The horsemen stopped at a bend in the road, for there, before them, in the celebrated valley of the Hermus, lay the golden Sardis, formerly the capital of the Lydian kingdom and residence of its king, Crœsus.[65]

Above the reed-thatched roofs of its numerous houses rose a black, steep rock; the white marble buildings on its summit could be seen from a great distance. These buildings formed the citadel, round the threefold walls of which, many centuries before, King Meles had carried a lion in order to render them impregnable.[66] On its southern side the citadel-rock was not so steep, and houses had been built upon it. Crœsus' former palace lay to the north, on the golden-sanded Pactolus. This reddish-colored river flowed above the market-place, (which, to our admiring travellers, looked like a barren spot in the midst of a blooming meadow), ran on in a westerly direction, and then entered a narrow mountain valley, where it washed the walls of the temple of Cybele.

Large gardens stretched away towards the east, and in the midst of them lay the lake Gygæus, covered with

65. Aeschylus, *Pers.* v. 45.

66. Herod. I. 84 and 94. V. 101.

gay boats and snowy swans, and sparkling like a mirror.

A short distance from the lake were a great number of artificial mounds, three of which were especially noticeable from their size and height.[67]

"What can those strange-looking earth-heaps mean?" said Darius, the leader of the troop, to Prexaspes, Cambyses' envoy, who rode at his side.

"They are the graves of former Lydian kings," was the answer. "The middle one is in memory of the princely pair Panthea and Abradatas,* and the largest, that one to the left, was erected to the father of Crœsus, Alyattes. It was raised by the tradesmen, mechanics, and girls, to their late king, and on the five columns, which stand on its summit, you can read how much each of these classes contributed to the work. The girls were the most industrious.[68] Gyges' grandfather is said to have been their especial friend."

67. The lake of Gygæa was known as early as Homer's day. *Iliad.* II. 863. XX. 386, 392. According to Prokesch, it is 3 leagues long and one broad. See also Hamilton's *Asia Minor*, I. p. 145. Herodotus (I. 93.) calls the tombs of the Lydian kings the largest works of human hands, next to the Egyptian and Babylonian. These cone-shaped hills can be seen to this day, standing near the ruins of Sardis, not far from the lake of Gygæa. Hamilton (*Asia Minor*, I. p. 45.) counted some sixty of them, and could not ride round the hill of Alyattes in less than ten minutes. Prokesch saw 100 such tumuli (*Denkwürdigkeiten und Erinnerungen aus dem Orient*). The largest, the tomb of Alyattes, still measures 3400 feet in circumference, and the height of its slope is 650 feet. According to Prokesch, gigantic Phallus columns lie on some of these graves. Spiegelthal, the Prussian consul at Smyrna, discovered a separate chamber in the tumulus of Alyattes. *Monatsberichte der Berliner Akademie der Wisssenschaften*, Dec. 1854. p. 700. Farther particulars by E. Curtius. *Beitrage zur Geschichte und Topographie Kleinasiens. Abhandl. d. k. A. d. Wissenschaften zu Berlin.* 1872. Ph-h. Kl. page 84 and following.

68. Herod. I. 93.

* See note 22.

"Then the grandson must have degenerated very much from the old stock."

"Yes, and that seems the more remarkable, because Crœsus himself in his youth was by no means averse to women, and the Lydians generally are devoted to such pleasures. You see the white walls of that temple yonder in the midst of its sacred grove. That is the temple of the goddess of Sardis,[69] Cybele or Ma, as they call her. In that grove there is many a sheltered spot where the young people of Sardis meet, as they say, in honor of their goddess."

"Just as in Babylon, at the festival of Mylitta."[70]

"There is the same custom too on the coast of

69. The Greeks of Asia Minor adopted the worship of this goddess, and represented her either as riding on a lion or attended by lions. O. Müller, *Archäol*, §. 395. 387. In her hand she carried a tambourine, which, according to Pindar, in Strabo p. 470, was struck at her wild festivals. In his *Thekla*, Paul Heyse has given a beautiful description of a Cybele-festival. This goddess was the personification of nature's productiveness and fertility, and the worship offered her was of a voluptuous character. Among the Greeks, this mother of the inhabitants of Asia Minor was the wife of Kronos, the mother of Zeus, and the grandmother of the gods. The myth of Cybele, or the fruitful earth, probably lies at the root of the story of Niobe, who is robbed of her children every autumn, M. Duncker. *Geschichte des Altherthums*. I. p. 252. The stone of Niobe looks, as Pausanias tells us (I. 21.) like a weeping woman. On the 4th Nov. 1862, v. Olfers laid some photographs before the Archæological Society at Berlin, which prove that this figure of a woman had in some measure been obtained by the assistance of art. Dr. A. Stictz, who saw it, found a relief rudely executed on the rock. Cybele was worshipped at Pessinus in the form of a middle-sized stone, which a man could lift. This stone was brought to Rome at the end of the third century, B. C. by command of the Sibylline books, and used to test the suspected chastity of the vestal virgins. Livius XXIX. 14. Its priests were eunuchs from Phrygia. The two last-named circumstances, in connection with other information, prove that two different divinities (the one friendly, the other hostile to production) must have been denoted by the name Cybele. Duncker very justly sees in her a union of the Syrian Astarte and Aschera.

70. Herod. I. 199. Book of Baruch VI. 43. Strabo 1058.

Cyprus.[71] When I landed there on the way back from Egypt, I was met by a troop of lovely girls, who, with songs, dances, and the clang of cymbals, conducted me to the sacred grove of their goddess."

"Well, Zopyrus will not grumble at Bartja's illness."

"He will spend more of his time in the grove of Cybele, than at his patient's bedside. How glad I shall be to see that jolly fellow again!"

"Yes, he'll keep you from falling into those melancholy fits that you have been so subject to lately."

"You are quite right to blame me for those fits, and I must not yield to them, but they are not without ground. Crœsus says we only get low-spirited, when we are either too lazy or too weak to struggle against annoyances, and I believe he is right. But no one shall dare to accuse Darius of weakness or idleness. If I can't rule the world, at least I will be my own master."

And as he said these words, the handsome youth drew himself up, and sat erect in his saddle. His companion gazed in wonder at him.

"Really, you son of Hystaspes," he said, "I believe you must be meant for something great. It was not by chance that, when you were still a mere child, the gods sent their favorite Cyrus that dream which induced him to order you into safe keeping."

"And yet my wings have never appeared."

"No bodily ones, certainly; but mental ones, likely enough. Young man, young man, you're on a dangerous road."

"Have winged creatures any need to be afraid of precipices?"

71. Herod. I. 199. Justin XVIII. 5. Mövers, *Religion der Phœnizier a. a. O.*

"Certainly; when their strength fails them."

"But I am strong."

"Stronger creatures than you will try to break your pinions."

"Let them. I want nothing but what is right, and shall trust to my star."

"Do you know its name?"

"It ruled in the hour of my birth, and its name is Anahita."[72]

"I think I know better. A burning ambition is the sun, whose rays guide all your actions. Take care; I tried that way myself once; it leads to fame or to disgrace, but very seldom to happiness. Fame to the ambitious is like salt water to the thirsty; the more he gets, the more he wants. I was once only a poor soldier, and am now Cambyses' ambassador. But you, what can you have to strive for? There is no man in the kingdom greater than yourself, after the sons of Cyrus . . . Do my eyes deceive me? Surely those two men riding to meet us with a troop of horsemen must be Gyges and Zopyrus. The Angare, who left the inn before us, must have told them of our coming."

"To be sure. Look at that fellow Zopyrus, how he's waving and beckoning with that palm-leaf."

"Here, you fellows, cut us a few twigs from those bushes—quick. We'll answer his green palm-leaf with a purple pomegranate-branch."

In a few minutes the friends had embraced one another, and the two bands were riding together into the populous town, through the gardens surrounding the lake Gygæus, the Sardians' place of recreation. It was

72. The planet Venus. Vullers, *Fragmente über die Religion des Zoroaster.*

now near sunset, a cooler breeze was beginning to blow, and the citizens were pouring through the gates to enjoy themselves in the open air. Lydian and Persian warriors, the former wearing richly-ornamented helmets, the latter tiaras in the form of a cylinder, were following girls who were painted and wreathed. Children were being led to the lake by their nurses, to see the swans fed. An old blind man was seated under a plane-tree, singing sad ditties to a listening crowd and accompanying them on the Magadis, the twenty-stringed Lydian lute. Youths were enjoying themselves at games of ball, ninepins, and dice,[73] and half-grown girls screaming with fright, when the ball hit one of their group or nearly fell into the water.

The travellers scarcely noticed this gay scene, though at another time it would have delighted them. They were too much interested in enquiring particulars of Bartja's illness and recovery.

At the brazen gates of the palace which had formerly belonged to Crœsus, they were met by Oroetes, the satrap of Sardis, in a magnificent court-dress overloaded with ornaments. He was a stately man, whose small penetrating black eyes looked sharply out from beneath a bushy mass of eyebrow. His satrapy was one of the most important and profitable in the entire kingdom, and his household could bear a comparison with that of Cambyses in richness and splendor. Though he possessed fewer wives and attendants than the king, it was no inconsiderable troop of guards, slaves, eunuchs and

73. The Lydians are said to have invented various games, amongst others dice and balls, but not the game of draughts. Herod. I. 94. This last seems to have originated in Egypt, and it is highly probable, that the game of ball was known on the Nile earlier than in Lydia.

gorgeously-dressed officials, which appeared at the palace-gates to receive the travellers.

The vice-regal palace, which was still kept up with great magnificence, had been, in the days when Crœsus occupied it, the most splendid of royal residences; after the taking of Sardis, however, the greater part of the dethroned king's treasures and works of art had been sent to Cyrus's treasure-house in Pasargadæ. When that time of terror had passed, the Lydians brought many a hidden treasure into the light of day once more, and, by their industry and skill in art during the peaceful years which they enjoyed under Cyrus and Cambyses, recovered their old position so far, that Sardis was again looked upon as one of the wealthiest cities of Asia Minor, and therefore, of the world.

Accustomed as Darius and Prexaspes were to royal splendor, they were still astonished at the beauty and brilliancy of the satrap's palace. The marble work, especially, made a great impression on them, as nothing of the kind was to be found in Babylon, Susa or Ecbatana,[74] where burnt brick and cedar-wood supply the place of the polished marble.

They found Bartja lying on a couch in the great hall; he looked very pale, and stretched out his arms towards them.

The friends supped together at the satrap's table and then retired to Bartja's private room, in order to enjoy an undisturbed conversation.

74. The palace of Persepolis did not exist at the date of our story. It was built partly of black stone from Mount Rachmed, and partly of white marble; it was probably begun by Darius. The palace of Susa was built of brick, (Strabo p. 728) that of Ecbatana of wood overlaid with plates of gold of immense value, and roofed with tiles made of the precious metals. Polyb. X. 27.

"Well, Bartja, how did you come by this dangerous illness?" was Darius' first question after they were seated.

"I was thoroughly well, as you know," said Bartja, "when we left Babylon, and we reached Germa, a little town on the Sangarius, without the slightest hindrance. The ride was long and we were very tired, burnt too by the scorching May sun, and covered with dust; the river flows by the station, and its waves looked so clear and bright—so inviting for a bathe—that in a minute Zopyrus and I were off our horses, undressed, and in the water. Gyges told us we were very imprudent, but we felt confident that we were too much inured to such things to get any harm, and very much enjoyed our swim in the cool, green water. Gyges, perfectly calm as usual, let us have our own way, waited till our bath was over, and then plunged in himself.

"In two hours we were in our saddles again, pushing on as if for our very lives, changing horses at every station, and turning night into day.

"We were near Ipsus, when I began to feel violent pains in the head and limbs. I was ashamed to say anything about it and kept upright on my saddle, until we had to take fresh horses at Bagis. Just as I was in the very act of mounting, I lost my senses and strength, and fell down on the ground in a dead faint."

"Yes, a pretty fright you gave us," interrupted Zopyrus, "by dropping down in that fashion. It was fortunate that Gyges was there, for I lost my wits entirely; he, of course, kept his presence of mind, and after relieving his feelings in words not exactly flattering to us two, he behaved like a circumspect general.—A fool of a doctor came running up and protested that it

was all over with poor Bart, for which I gave him a good thrashing."

"Which he didn't particularly object to," said the satrap, laughing, "seeing that you told them to lay a gold stater on every stripe."

"Yes, yes, my pugnacity costs me very dear sometimes. But to our story. As soon as Bartja had opened his eyes, Gyges sent me off to Sardis to fetch a good physician and an easy travelling-carriage. That ride won't so soon be imitated. An hour before I reached the gates my third horse knocked up under me, so I had to trust to my own legs, and began running as fast as I could. The people must all have thought me mad. At last I saw a man on horseback—a merchant from Kelænæ—dragged him from his horse, jumped into the saddle, and, before the next morning dawned, I was back again with our invalid, bringing the best physician in Sardis, and Oroetes' most commodious travelling-carriage. We brought him to this house at a slow footpace, and here a violent fever came on, he became delirious, talked all the nonsense that could possibly come into a human brain, and made us so awfully anxious, that the mere remembrance of that time brings the big drops of perspiration to my forehead."

Bartja took his friend's hand: "I owe my life to him and Gyges," said he, turning to Darius. "Till to-day, when they set out to meet you, they have never left me for a minute; a mother could not have nursed her sick child more carefully. And Oroetes, I am much obliged to you too; doubly so because your kindness subjected you to annoyance."

"How could that be?" asked Darius.

"That Polykrates of Samos, whose name we heard

so often in Egypt, has the best physician that Greece has ever produced. While I was lying here ill, Oroetes wrote to this Democedes,* making him immense promises, if he would only come to Sardis directly. The Samian pirates, who infest the whole Ionian coast, took the messenger captive and brought Oroetes' letter to their master Polykrates. He opened it, and sent the messenger back with the answer, that Democedes was in his pay, and that if Oroetes[75] needed his advice he must apply to Polykrates himself. Our generous friend submitted for my sake, and asked the Samian to send his physician to Sardis."

"Well," said Prexaspes, "and what followed?"

"The proud island-prince sent him at once. He cured me, as you see, and left us a few days ago loaded with presents."

"Well," interrupted Zopyrus, "I can quite understand, that Polykrates likes to keep his physician near him. I assure you, Darius, it would not be easy to find his equal. He's as handsome as Minutscher, as clever as Piran Wisa, as strong as Rustem,** and as benevolent and helpful as the god Soma.*** I wish you could have seen how well he threw those round metal plates he calls discs. I am no weakling, but when we wrestled he soon threw me. And then he could tell such famous stories—stories that made a man's heart dance within him."

75. This very Oroetes afterwards succeeded in enticing Polykrates to Sardis and there crucified him. Herod. III. 120—125. Valerius Maximus VI. 9. 5.

* See vol. I. note 80.

** These are the names of heroes from the oldest of the Persian legends, preserved to us principally in the epic poems of Firdusi.

*** See vol. I. note 265.

"We know just such a fellow too," said Darius, smiling at his friend's enthusiasm. "That Athenian Phanes, who came to prove our innocence."

"The physician Democedes is from Crotona, a place which must lie somewhere very near the setting sun."

"But is inhabited by Greeks, like Athens." added Oroetes. "Ah, my young friends, you must beware of those fellows; they're as cunning, deceitful, and selfish, as they are strong, clever, and handsome."

"Democedes is generous and sincere," cried Zopyrus.

"And Crœsus himself thinks Phanes not only an able, but a virtuous man," added Darius.

"Sappho too has always, and only spoken well of the Athenian," said Bartja, in confirmation of Darius's remark. "But don't let us talk any more about these Greeks," he went on. "They give Oroetes so much trouble by their refractory and stubborn conduct, that he is not very fond of them."

"The gods know that," sighed the satrap. "It's more difficult to keep one Greek town in order, than all the countries between the Euphrates and the Tigris."

While Oroetes was speaking, Zopyrus had gone to the window. "The stars are already high in the heavens," he said, "and Bartja is tired; so make haste, Darius, and tell us something about home."

The son of Hystaspes agreed at once, and began by relating the events which we have heard already. Bartja, especially, was distressed at hearing of Nitetis' sad end, and the discovery of Amasis' fraud filled them all with astonishment. After a short pause, Darius went on:

"When once Nitetis' descent had been fully proved, Cambyses was like a changed man. He called a council of war, and appeared at table in the royal robes instead of his mourning garments. You can fancy what universal joy the idea of a war with Egypt excited. Even Crœsus, who you know is one of Amasis' well-wishers, and advises peace whenever it is possible, had not a word to say against it. The next morning, as usual, what had been resolved on in intoxication was reconsidered by sober heads; after several opinions had been given, Phanes asked permission to speak, and spoke I should think for an hour. But how well! It was as if every word he said came direct from the gods. He has learnt our language in a wonderfully short time, but it flowed from his lips like honey. Sometimes he drew tears from every eye, at others excited stormy shouts of joy, and then wild bursts of rage. His gestures were as graceful as those of a dancing-girl, but at the same time manly and dignified. I can't repeat his speech; my poor words, by the side of his, would sound like the rattle of a drum after a peal of thunder. But when at last, inspired and carried away by his eloquence, we had unanimously decided on war, he began to speak once more on the best ways and means of prosecuting it successfully."

Here Darius was obliged to stop, as Zopyrus had fallen on his neck in an ecstasy of delight. Bartja, Gyges and Oroetes were not less delighted, and they all begged him to go on with his tale.

"Our army," began Darius afresh, "ought to be at the boundaries of Egypt by the month Farwardin,[76] as

76. Farwardin can be reckoned as our March, Murdâd as July. Spiegel, *Avesta*, Einleitung p. XCVIII.

the inundation of the Nile, which would hinder the march of our infantry, begins in Murdâd.* Phanes is now on his way to the Arabians to secure their assistance;" in hopes that these sons of the desert may furnish our army with water and guides through their dry and thirsty land. He will also endeavor to win the rich island of Cyprus, which he once conquered for Amasis, over to our side. As it was through his mediation that the kings of the island were allowed to retain their crowns, they will be willing to listen to his advice. In short the Athenian leaves nothing uncared for, and knows every road and path as if he were the sun himself. He showed us a picture of the world on a plate of copper."

Oroetes nodded and said, "I have such a picture of the world too. A Milesian named Hekataeus,[78] who spends his life in travelling, drew it, and gave it me in exchange for a free-pass."

"What notions these Greeks have in their heads!" exclaimed Zopyrus, who could not explain to himself what a picture of the world could look like.

77. Herod. III. 5.

78. Hekataeus of Miletus may be called "the father of geography," as Herodotus was "the father of history." He improved the map made by Anaximander, and his great work, "the journey round the world," was much prized by the ancients; but unfortunately, with the exception of some very small fragments, has now perished. Herodotus assures us, (V. 36.) that Hekataeus was intimately acquainted with every part of the Persian empire, and had also travelled over Egypt. He lived at the date of our narrative, having been born at Miletus 550 B. C. He lived to see the fall of his native city in 496 B. C. His map has been restored by Klausen in the *Fragm. Hecat.* and can be seen also in Mure's *Lan. and Lit. of Ancient Greece.* Vol. IV. Maps existed, however, much earlier, the earliest known being one of the gold-mines, drawn very cleverly by an Egyptian priest, and so well sketched as to give a pretty clear idea of the part of the country intended. It is preserved in the Egyptian Museum at Turin.

* *Farwardin*, March. *Murdâd*, July.

"To-morrow I will show you my copper tablet,' said Oroetes, "but now we must allow Darius to go on."

"So Phanes has gone to Arabia," continued Darius, "and Prexaspes was sent hither not only to command you, Oroetes, to raise as many forces as possible, especially Ionians and Carians, of whom Phanes has offered to undertake the command, but also to propose terms of alliance to Polykrates."

"To that pirate!" asked Oroetes, and his face darkened.

"The very same," answered Prexaspes, not appearing to notice the change in Oroetes' face. "Phanes has already received assurances from this important naval power, which sound as if we might expect a favorable answer to my proposal."

"The Phœnician, Syrian and Ionian ships of war would be quite sufficient to cope with the Egyptian fleet."

"There you are right; but if Polykrates were to declare against us, we should not be able to hold our own at sea; you say yourself that he is all-powerful in the Ægean."

"Still I decidedly disapprove of entering into treaty with such a robber."

"We want powerful allies, and Polykrates is very powerful at sea. It will be time to humble him, when we have used him to help us in conquering Egypt. For the present I entreat you to suppress all personal feeling, and keep the success of our great plan alone in view. I am empowered to say this in the king's name, and to show his ring in token thereof."

Oroetes made a brief obeisance before this symbol

of despotism, and asked: "What does Cambyses wish me to do?"

"He commands you to use every means in your power to secure an alliance with the Samian; and also to send your troops to join the main army on the plains of Babylon as soon as possible."

The satrap bowed and left the room with a look betraying irritation and defiance.

When the echo of his footsteps had died away among the colonnades of the inner court, Zopyrus exclaimed: "Poor fellow, it's really very hard for him to have to meet that proud man, who has so often behaved insolently to him, on friendly terms. Think of that story about the physician for instance."

"You are too lenient," interrupted Darius. "I don't like this Oroetes. He has no right to receive the king's commands in that way. Didn't you see him bite his lips till they bled, when Prexaspes showed him the king's ring?"

"Yes," cried the envoy, "he's a defiant, perverse man. He left the room so quickly, only because he could not keep down his anger any longer."

"Still," said Bartja, "I hope you will keep his conduct a secret from my brother, for he has been very good to me."

Prexaspes bowed, but Darius said: "We must keep an eye on the fellow. Just here, so far from the king's gate and in the midst of nations hostile to Persia, we want governors who are more ready to obey their king than this Oroetes seems to be. Why, he seems to fancy he is King of Lydia!"

"Do you dislike the satrap?" said Zopyrus.

"Well, I think I do," was the answer. "I always

take an aversion or a fancy to people at first sight, and very seldom find reason to change my mind afterwards. I disliked Oroetes before I heard him speak a word, and I remember having the same feeling towards Psamtik, though Amasis took my fancy."

"There's no doubt that you're very different from the rest of us," said Zopyrus laughing, "but now, to please me, let this poor Oroetes alone. I'm glad he's gone though, because we can talk more freely about home. How is Kassandane? and your worshipped Atossa? Crœsus too, how is he? and what are my wives about? They'll soon have a new companion. To-morrow I intend to sue for the hand of Oroetes' pretty daughter. We've talked a good deal of love with our eyes already. I don't know whether we spoke Persian or Syrian, but we said the most charming things to one another."

The friends laughed, and Darius, joining in their merriment, said: "Now you shall hear a piece of very good news. I have kept it to the last, because it is the best I have. Now, Bartja, prick up your ears. Your mother, the noble Kassandane, has been cured of her blindness! Yes, yes, it is quite true.—Who cured her? Why who should it be, but that crabbed old Nebenchari, who has become, if possible, moodier than ever. Come, now, calm yourselves, and let me go on with my story, or it will be morning before Bartja gets to sleep. Indeed, I think we had better separate now: you've heard the best, and have something to dream about What, you will not? Then, in the name of Mithras, I must go on, though it should make my heart bleed.

"I'll begin with the king. As long as Phanes was in Babylon, he seemed to forget his grief for Nitetis.

The Athenian was never allowed to leave him. They were as inseparable as Reksch and Rustem.* Cambyses had no time to think of his sorrow, for Phanes had always some new idea or other, and entertained us all, as well as the king, marvellously. And we all liked him too; perhaps, because no one could really envy him. Whenever he was alone, the tears came into his eyes at the thought of his boy, and this made his great cheerfulness—a cheerfulness which he always managed to impart to the king, Bartja,—the more admirable. Every morning he went down to the Euphrates with Cambyses and the rest of us, and enjoyed watching the sons of the Achæmenidæ at their exercises.** When he saw them riding at full speed past the sand-hills and shooting the pots placed on them into fragments with their arrows, or throwing blocks of wood at one another and cleverly evading the blows,[79] he confessed that he could not imitate them in these exercises, but at the same time he offered to accept a challenge from any of us in throwing the spear and in wrestling. In his quick way he sprang from his horse, stripped off his clothes—it was really a shame[80]—and, to the delight of the boys, threw their wrestling-master as if he had been a feather. Then he knocked over a number of bragging fellows,

79. Niebuhr, on his journey to Asia, saw several young men at Shiraz playing very eagerly at these games. See also Hyde, *De Ludis Orientalium.*

80. In the East, nudity was, even in those days, held to be disgraceful, while the Greeks thought nothing so beautiful as the naked human body. The Hetaira Phryne was summoned before the judges for an offence against religion. Her defender, seeing that sentence was about to be pronounced against his client, suddenly tore away the garment which covered her bosom. The artifice was successful. The judges pronounced her not guilty, being convinced that such wondrous grace and beauty could only belong to a favorite of Aphrodite. Athen. XIII. p. 590.

* See note 30. ** See vol. I. note 245.

and would have thrown me too if he had not been too fatigued. I assure you, I am really stronger than he is, for I can lift greater weights, but he is as nimble as an eel, and has wonderful tricks by which he gets hold of his adversary. His being naked too is a great help. If it were not so indecent, we ought always to wrestle stripped, and anoint our skins, as the Greeks do, with the olive-oil. He beat us too in throwing the spear, but the king, who you know is proud of being the best archer in Persia, sent his arrow farther. Phanes was especially pleased with our rule, that in a wrestling-match the one who is thrown must kiss the hand of his victor. At last he showed us a new exercise:—boxing. He refused, however, to try his skill on any one but a slave, so Cambyses sent for the biggest and strongest man among the servants—my groom, Bessus—a giant who can bring the hind legs of a horse together and hold them so firmly that the creature trembles all over and cannot stir. This big fellow, taller by a head than Phanes, shrugged his shoulders contemptuously on hearing that he was to box with the little foreign gentleman. He felt quite sure of victory, placed himself opposite his adversary, and dealt him a blow heavy enough to kill an elephant. Phanes avoided it cleverly, in the same moment hitting the giant with his naked fist so powerfully under the eyes, that the blood streamed from his nose and mouth, and the huge, uncouth fellow fell on the ground with a yell. When they picked him up his face looked like a pumpkin of a greenish-blue color. The boys shouted with delight at his discomfiture; but we admired the dexterity of this Greek, and were especially glad to see the king in such good spirits; we noticed this most when Phanes was singing Greek

songs and dance-melodies to him accompanied by the lute.

"Meanwhile Kassandane's blindness had been cured, and this of course tended not a little to disperse the king's melancholy.

"In short it was a very pleasant time, and I was just going to ask for Atossa's hand in marriage, when Phanes went off to Arabia, and everything was changed.

"No sooner had he turned his back on the gates of Babylon than all the evil Divs seemed to have entered into the king. He went about, a moody, silent man, speaking to no one; and to drown his melancholy would begin drinking, even at an early hour in the morning, quantities of the strongest Syrian wine. By the evening he was generally so intoxicated that he had to be carried out of the hall, and would wake up the next morning with headache and spasms. In the day-time he would wander about as if looking for something, and in the night they often heard him calling Nitetis. The physicians became very anxious about his health, but when they sent him medicine he threw it away. It was quite right of Crœsus to say, as he did once 'Ye Magi and Chaldæans! before trying to cure a sick man we must discover the seat of his disease. Do you know it in this case? No? Then I will tell you what ails the king. He has an internal complaint and a wound. The former is called *ennui*, and the latter is in his heart. The Athenian is a good remedy for the first,—but for the second I know of none; such wounds either scar over of themselves, or the patient bleeds to death inwardly.'"

"I know of a remedy for the king though," exclaimed Otanes when he heard these words. "We

must persuade him to send for the women, or at least for my daughter Phædime, back from Susa. Love is good for dispersing melancholy, and makes the blood flow faster." We acknowledged that he was right, and advised him to remind the king of his banished wives. He ventured to make the proposal while we were at supper, but got such a harsh rebuff for his pains, that we all pitied him. Soon after this, Cambyses sent one morning for all the Mobeds and Chaldæans, and commanded them to interpret a strange dream which he had had. In his dream he had been standing in the midst of a dry and barren plain: barren as a threshing-floor,—it did not produce a single blade of grass. Displeased at the desert aspect of the place, he was just going to seek other and more fruitful regions, when Atossa appeared, and, without seeing him, ran towards a spring which welled up through the arid soil as if by enchantment. While he was gazing in wonder at this scene, he noticed that wherever the foot of his sister touched the parched soil, graceful terebinths[81] sprang up, changing, as they grew, into cypresses whose tops reached unto heaven. As he was going to speak to Atossa, he awoke.

"The Mobeds and Chaldæans consulted together and interpreted the dream thus: 'Atossa would be successful in all she undertook.'

"Cambyses seemed satisfied with this answer, but, as the next night the vision appeared again, he threatened the wise men with death, unless they could give him another and a different interpretation. They pondered long, and at last answered, 'that Atossa

81. The kings of Persia had to eat a terebinth at their coronation. Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 3.

would become a queen and the mother of mighty princes.'

"This answer really contented the king, and he smiled strangely to himself as he told us his dream.

"The same day Kassandane sent for me and told me to give up all thoughts of her daughter, as I valued my life.

"Just as I was leaving the queen's garden I saw Atossa behind a pomegranate-bush. She beckoned. I went to her; and in that hour we forgot danger and sorrow, but said farewell to each other for ever. Now you know all; and now that I have given her up—now that I know it would be madness even to think of her again—I am obliged to be very stern with myself, lest, like the king, I should fall into deep melancholy for the sake of a woman. And this is the end of the story, the close of which we were all expecting, when Atossa, as I lay under sentence of death, sent me a rose, and made me the happiest of mortals. If I had not betrayed my secret then, when we thought our last hour was near, it would have gone with me to my grave. But what am I talking about? I know I can trust to your secrecy, but pray don't look at me so deplorably. I think I am still to be envied, for I have had one hour of enjoyment that would outweigh a century of misery. Thank you,—thank you: now let me finish my story as quickly as I can.

"Three days after I had taken leave of Atossa I had to marry Artystone, the daughter of Gobryas. She is beautiful, and would make any other man happy. The day after the wedding the Angare reached Babylon with the news of your illness. My mind was made up at once; I begged the king to let me go to you, nurse you,

and warn you of the danger which threatens your life in Egypt—took leave of my bride, in spite of all my father-in-law's protestations, and went off at full speed with Prexaspes, never resting till I reached your side, my dear Bartja. Now I shall go with you and Zopyrus to Egypt, for Gyges must accompany the ambassador to Samos, as interpreter. This is the king's command; he has been in better spirits the last few days; the inspection of the masses of troops coming up to Babylon diverts him, besides which, the Chaldæans have assured him that the planet Adar,[82] which belongs to their war-god Chanon, promises a great victory to the Persian arms. When do you think you shall be able to travel, Bartja?"

"To-morrow, if you like," was the answer. "The doctors say the sea-voyage will do me good, and the journey by land to Smyrna is very short."

"And I can assure you," added Zopyrus, "that Sappho will cure you sooner than all the doctors in the world."

"Then we will start in three days;" said Darius after some consideration, "we have plenty to do before starting. Remember we are going into what may almost be called an enemy's country. I have been thinking the matter over, and it seems to me that Bartja must pass for a Babylonian carpet-merchant, I for his brother, and Zopyrus for a dealer in Sardian red."[83]

"Couldn't we be soldiers?" asked Zopyrus. "It's such an ignominious thing to be taken for cheating pedlers. How would it be, for instance, if we passed

82. The Planet Mars. *Chron. Pasch.* I. p. 18. Cedrenus, *Chron.* I. p. 29. Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* II. 20, 46.

83. A favorite color among the ancients, made from the blossoms of the Sandix tree. Arlstoph. *Acharn.* 113.

ourselves off for Lydian soldiers, escaped from punishment, and seeking service in the Egyptian army?"

"That's not a bad idea," said Bartja, "and I think too that we look more like soldiers than traders."

"Looks and manner are no guide," said Gyges. "Those great Greek merchants and ship-owners go about as proudly as if the world belonged to them. But I don't find Zopyrus' proposal a bad one."

"Then so let it be," said Darius, yielding. "In that case Oroetes must provide us with the uniform of Lydian Taxiarchs."[84]

"You'd better take the splendid dress of the Chiliarchs[84] at once, I think," cried Gyges. "Why, on such young men, that would excite suspicion directly."

"But we can't appear as common soldiers."

"No, but as Hekatontarchs."[84]

"All right," said Zopyrus laughing. "Anything you like except a shop-keeper.—So in three days we are off. I am glad I shall just have time to make sure of the satrap's little daughter, and to visit the grove of Cybele at last. Now, good night, Bartja; don't get up too early. What will Sappho say, if you come to her with pale cheeks?"

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84. The Persian army was decimally divided. Each division numbered 10,000 men, each regiment 1000, each company 100. The rank of Taxiarch was similar to that of a captain with us, a Hekatontarch commanded 100, and a Chiliarch 1000 men. Indeed later the title of Chiliarch betokened a very high office among the Persians, the holder of which (χιλιάρχης) is said to have been next in rank to the king. Diod. XVIII. 48. Aelian, *Var. Hist.* I. 21.

CHAPTER X.

THE sun of a hot midsummer-day had risen on Naukratis. The Nile had already begun to overflow its banks, and the fields and gardens of the Egyptians were covered with water.

The harbor was crowded with craft of all kinds. Egyptian vessels were there, manned by Phœnician colonists from the coasts of the Delta,[85] and bringing fine woven goods from Malta, metals and precious stones from Sardinia, wine and copper from Cyprus: Greek triremes laden with oil, wine and mastic-wood; metal-work and woollen wares from Chalcis, Phœnician and Syrian craft with gaily-colored sails, and freighted with cargoes of purple stuffs, gems, spices, glass-work, carpets and cedar-trees,—used in Egypt, where wood was very scarce, for building purposes,—and taking back gold, ivory, ebony, brightly-plumaged tropical birds, precious stones and black slaves,—the treasures of Ethiopia; but more especially the far-famed Egyptian corn, Memphian chariots, lace from Sais, and the finer sorts of papyrus. The time when commerce was carried on merely by barter was now, however, long past, and the merchants of Naukratis not seldom paid

85. In another place (Ebers, Aegypten p. 127.) we have endeavored to prove that Phœnician colonies existed on the coasts of the Delta. Egypto-Phœnician colonies can be proved to have existed in Sardinia, Crete, Malta, Cyprus, and in earlier times in Eubœa and other places. The discoveries which have been made in Sardinia and the treasures found in Cyprus by Cesnola are most instructive. Communicated by Canonicus Spano, Lamarmora, Neigebaur, in Gerhard's *Archäol Zeitung*, in the Bulletino Sardo and the latest by H. v. Malzan.

for their goods in gold coin and carefully-weighed* silver.

Large warehouses stood round the harbor of this Greek colony, and slightly-built dwelling-houses, into which the idle mariners were lured by the sounds of music and laughter, and the glances and voices of painted and rouged damsels.[86] Slaves, both white and colored, rowers and steersmen, in various costumes, were hurrying hither and thither, while the ships' captains, either dressed in the Greek fashion or in Phœnician garments of the most glaring colors, were shouting orders to their crews and delivering up their cargoes to the merchants. Whenever a dispute arose, the Egyptian police with their long staves, and the Greek warders of the harbor were quickly at hand. The latter were appointed by the elders of the merchant-body in this Milesian colony.**

The port was getting empty now, for the hour at which the market opened was near,[87] and none of the free Greeks cared to be absent from the market-place then. This time, however, not a few remained behind, curiously watching a beautifully-built Samian ship, the Okeia,[88] with a long prow like a swan's neck, on the

86. Setting aside the fact, that no large seaport of the ancient world was without such houses of amusement, those on the Canopic mouth of the Nile are expressly mentioned by Strabo, 801.

87. The following little story told by Strabo (658), proves how eagerly the Greeks thronged to market. A flute-player at Jasos was forsaken by his audience the moment they heard the sound of the market-bell, one man alone remaining behind. The musician thanked this man for not having allowed the bell to distract his attention. "What!" cried the other, "has it rung already?" and instantly departed too.

88. Ὠχεῖα "the swift." Böckh, *Staatshaushault der Athener* III. 93. Not only the Greek, but also the Phœnician ships were ornamented with likenesses of the gods.

* See vol. I. note 172. ** See vol. I. note 2.

front of which a likeness of the goddess Hera was conspicuous. It was discharging its cargo, but the public attention was more particularly attracted by three handsome youths, in the dress of Lydian officers, who left the ship, followed by a number of slaves carrying chests and packages.

The handsomest of the three travellers, in whom of course our readers recognize their three young friends, Darius, Bartja and Zopyrus, spoke to one of the harbor-police and asked for the house of Theopompus the Milesian, to whom they were bound on a visit.

Polite and ready to do a service, like all the Greeks, the police functionary at once led the way across the market-place,—where the opening of business had just been announced by the sound of a bell,*—to a handsome house, the property of the Milesian, Theopompus, one of the most important and respected men in Naukratis.

The party, however, did not succeed in crossing the market-place without hindrance. They found it easy enough to evade the importunities of impudent fish-sellers, and the friendly invitations of butchers, bakers, sausage and vegetable-sellers, and potters. But when they reached the part allotted[89] to the flower-girls, Zopyrus was so enchanted with the scene, that he clapped his hands for joy.

Three wonderfully-lovely girls, in white dresses of some half-transparent material, with colored borders,

89. Separate portions of the market (χύχλοι) were set apart for the sale of different goods. The part appointed for the flower-sellers, who passed in general for no better than they should be, was called the "myrtle-market." Aristoph. *Thesmoph.* 448. Becker, *Charikles*, II. p. 156.

* See note 87.

were seated together on low stools, binding roses, violets and orange-blossoms into one long wreath. Their charming heads were wreathed with flowers too, and looked very like the lovely rosebuds which one of them, on seeing the young men come up, held out to their notice.

"Buy my roses, my handsome gentlemen," she said in a clear, melodious voice, "to put in your sweethearts' hair."

Zopyrus took the flowers, and holding the girl's hand fast in his own, answered, "I come from a far country, my lovely child, and have no sweetheart in Naukratis yet; so let me put the roses in your own golden hair, and this piece of gold in your white little hand."

The girl burst into a merry laugh, showed her sister the handsome present,[90] and answered: "By Eros, such gentlemen as you cannot want for sweethearts. Are you brothers?"

"No."

"That's a pity, for we are sisters."

"And you thought we should make three pretty couples?"

"I may have thought it, but I did not say so."

"And your sisters?"

90. This passage was suggested by the following epigram of Dionysius:

"Roses are blooming on thy cheek, with roses thy basket is laden,
Which dost thou sell? The flowers? Thyself? Or both, my pretty maiden?"

Fr. Jacobs, *Gr. Blumenlese*, IX. 51. A piece of gold was very high payment. In the Acharnæ of Aristophanes the slave of Lamachus is supposed to offer an absurdly high price, when he is willing to pay 3 drachmæ (2*s.* 3*d.*) for a fat eel from Kopai, and one drachma (ninepence) for a brace of fieldfares.

The girls laughed, as if they were but little averse to such a connection, and offered Bartja and Darius rose-buds too.

The young men accepted them, gave each a gold piece in return, and were not allowed to leave these beauties until their helmets had been crowned with laurel.

Meanwhile the news of the strangers' remarkable liberality had spread among the many girls, who were selling ribbons, wreaths and flowers close by. They all brought roses too and invited the strangers with looks and words to stay with them and buy their flowers.

Zopyrus, like many a young gentleman in Naukratis, would gladly have accepted their invitations, for most of these girls were beautiful, and their hearts were not difficult to win; but Darius urged him to come away, and begged Bartja to forbid the thoughtless fellow's staying any longer. After passing the tables of the money-changers, and the stone seats on which the citizens sat in the open air and held their consultations, they arrived at the house of Theopompus.

The stroke given by their Greek guide with the metal knocker on the house-door was answered at once by a slave. As the master was at the market, the strangers were led by the steward, an old servant grown grey in the service of Theopompus, into the Andronitis,* and begged to wait there until he returned.

They were still engaged in admiring the paintings on the walls, and the artistic carving of the stone floor, when Theopompus, the merchant whom we first learnt to know at the house of Rhodopis, came back from the

* See vol. 1. note 25. The description of Rhodopis' house.

market, followed by a great number of slaves bearing his purchases.[91]

He received the strangers with charming politeness and asked in what way he could be of use to them, on which Bartja, having first convinced himself that no unwished-for listeners were present, gave him the roll he had received from Phanes at parting.

Theopompus had scarcely read its contents, when he made a low bow to the prince, exclaiming: "By Zeus, the father of hospitality, this is the greatest honor that could have been conferred upon my house! All I possess is yours, and I beg you to ask your companions to accept with kindness what I can offer. Pardon my not having recognized you at once in your Lydian dress. It seems to me that your hair is shorter and your beard thicker, than when you left Egypt. Am I right in imagining that you do not wish to be recognized? It shall be exactly as you wish. He is the best host, who allows his guests the most freedom. Ah, now I recognize your friends; but they have disguised themselves and cut their curls also. Indeed, I could almost say that you, my friend, whose name . . ."

"My name is Darius."

"That you, Darius, have dyed your hair black. Yes? Then you see my memory does not deceive me. But that is nothing to boast of, for I saw you several times at Sais, and here too, on your arrival and departure. You ask, my prince, whether you would be generally recognized? Certainly not. The foreign dress, the change in your hair and the coloring of your

91. Men of high rank among the Greeks did not disdain to make purchases at market, accompanied by their slaves, but respectable women could not appear there. Female slaves were generally sent to buy what was needed. Becker, *Charikles*, II. p. 150.

eyebrows have altered you wonderfully. But excuse me a moment, my old steward seems to have some important message to give."

In a few minutes Theopompus came back, exclaiming: "No, no, my honored friends, you have certainly not taken the wisest way of entering Naukratis incognito. You have been joking with the flower-girls and paying them for a few roses, not like runaway Lydian Hekatontarchs, but like the great lords you are. All Naukratis knows the pretty, frivolous sisters, Stephanion, Chloris and Irene, whose garlands have caught many a heart, and whose sweet glances have lured many a bright obolus out of the pockets of our gay young men. They're very fond of visiting the flower-girls at market-time, and agreements are entered into then for which more than one gold piece must be paid later; but for a few roses and good words they are not accustomed to be so liberal as you have been. The girls have been boasting about you and your gifts, and showing your good red gold to their stingier suitors. As rumor is a goddess who is very apt to exaggerate and to make a crocodile out of a lizard, it happened that news reached the Egyptian captain on guard at the market, that some newly-arrived Lydian warriors had been scattering gold broadcast among the flower-girls. This excited suspicion, and induced the Toparch* to send an officer here to enquire from whence you come, and what is the object of your journey hither. I was obliged to use a little stratagem to impose upon him, and told him, as I believe you wish, that you were rich young men from Sardis, who had fled on account of having incurred the satrap's ill-will. But I see the government officer

* See vol. 1. note 140.

coming, and with him the secretary who is to make out passports which will enable you to remain on the Nile unmolested. I have promised him a handsome reward, if he can help you in getting admitted into the king's mercenaries. He was caught and believed my story. You are so young, that nobody would imagine you were entrusted with a secret mission."

The talkative Greek had scarcely finished speaking when the clerk, a lean, dry-looking man, dressed in white, came in, placed himself opposite the strangers and asked them from whence they came and what was the object of their journey.

The youths held to their first assertion, that they were Lydian Hekatontarchs, and begged the functionary to provide them with passes and tell them in what way they might most easily obtain admittance into the king's troop of auxiliaries.

The man did not hesitate long, after Theopompus had undertaken to be their surety, and the desired documents were made out.

Bartja's pass ran thus:

"Smerdis, the son of Sandon of Sardis, about 22 years of age—figure, tall and slender—face, well-formed:—nose, straight:—forehead, high with a small scar in the middle:—is hereby permitted to remain in those parts of Egypt in which the law allows foreigners to reside, as surety has been given for him.

In the King's name.

Sachons, Clerk.

Darius and Zopyrus received passports similarly worded.[92]

92. Similar descriptions have been preserved in the papyri. Wilkinson, in his *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, gives

When the government official had left the house, Theopompus rubbed his hands and said: "Now if you will follow my advice on all points you can stay in Egypt safely enough. Keep these little rolls as if they were the apple of your eye, and never part from them. Now, however, I must beg you to follow me to breakfast and to tell me, if agreeable to you, whether a report which has just been making the round of the market is not, as usual, entirely false. A trireme from Kolophon, namely, has brought the news that your powerful brother, noble Bartja, is preparing to make war with Amasis."

On the evening of the same day, Bartja and Sappho saw each other again. In that first hour surprise and joy together made Sappho's happiness too great for words. When they were once more seated in the acanthus-grove whose blossoming branches had so often seen and sheltered their young love, she embraced him tenderly, but for a long time they did not speak one word. They saw neither moon nor stars moving silently above them, in the warm summer night; they did not even hear the nightingales who were still repeating their favorite, flute-like, Itys-call to one another; nor did they feel the dew which fell as heavily on their fair heads as on the flowers in the grass around them.

At last Bartja, taking both Sappho's hands in his own, looked long and silently into her face, as if to stamp her likeness for ever on his memory. When he

a picture from Thebes in which a man, making obeisance, is being led before another, a clerk or secretary, who appears to be making out a passport for him.

spoke at last, she cast down her eyes, for he said: "In my dreams, Sappho, you have always been the most lovely creature that Auramazda ever created, but now I see you again, you are more lovely even than my dreams."

And when a bright, happy glance from her had thanked him for these words, he drew her closer to him, asking: "Did you often think of me?"

"I thought only of you."

"And did you hope to see me soon?"

"Yes; hour after hour I thought, 'now he must be coming.' Sometimes I went into the garden in the morning and looked towards your home in the East, and a bird flew towards me from thence and I felt a twitching in my right eyelid; or when I was putting my box to rights and found the laurel crown which I put by as a remembrance, because you looked so well in it, —Melitta says such wreaths are good for keeping true love[93]—then I used to clap my hands with joy and think, 'to-day he must come;' and I would run down to the Nile and wave my handkerchief to every passing boat, for every boat I thought must be bringing you to me. But you did not come, and then I went sadly home, and would sit down by the fire on the hearth in the women's room, and sing, and gaze into the fire till grandmother would wake me out of my dream by saying: 'Listen to me, girl; whoever dreams by daylight is in danger of lying awake at night, and getting up in the morning with a sad heart, a tired brain and weary limbs. The day was not given us for sleep, and we

93. A bird flying from the right side, and a twitching of the right eye were considered fortunate omens. Theokritus, III. 37. The wreath put by. See Lucian. *Tox.* 30.

must live in it with open eyes, that not a single hour may be idly spent. The past belongs to the dead; only fools count upon the future; but wise men hold fast by the ever young present; by work they foster all the various gifts which Zeus, Apollo, Pallas, Cypris lend; by work they raise, and perfect and ennoble them, until their feelings, actions, words and thoughts become harmonious like a well-tuned lute. You cannot serve the man to whom you have given your whole heart,—to whom in your great love you look up as so much higher than yourself—you cannot prove the steadfastness and faithfulness of that love better, than by raising and improving your mind to the utmost of your power. Every good and beautiful truth that you learn is an offering to him you love best, for in giving your whole self, you give your virtues too. But no one gains this victory in dreams. The dew by which such blossoms are nourished is called the sweat of man's brow.' So she would speak to me, and then I started up ashamed and left the hearth, and either took my lyre to learn new songs, or listened to my loving teacher's words—she is wiser than most men—attentively and still. And so the time passed on; a rapid stream, just like our river Nile, which flows unceasingly, and brings such changing scenes upon its waves,—sometimes a golden boat with streamers gay,—sometimes a fearful, ravenous crocodile."

"But now we are sitting in the golden boat. Oh, if time's waves would only cease to flow! If this one moment could but last for aye. You lovely girl, how perfectly you speak,—how well you understand and remember all this beautiful teaching and make it even more beautiful by your way of repeating it. Yes, Sap-

pho, I am very proud of you. In you I have a treasure which makes me richer than my brother, though half the world belongs to him."

"You proud of me? you, a king's son, the best and handsomest of your family?"

"The greatest worth that I can find in myself is, that you think me worthy of your love."

"Tell me, ye gods, how can this little heart hold so much joy without breaking? 'Tis like a vase that's overfilled with purest, heaviest gold?"

"Another heart will help you to bear it; and that is my own, for mine is again supported by yours, and with that help I can laugh at every evil that the world or night may bring."

"Oh, don't excite the envy of the gods; human happiness often vexes them. Since you left us we have passed some very, very sad days. The two poor children of our kind Phanes—a boy as beautiful as Eros, and a little girl as fair and rosy as a summer morning's cloud just lit up by the sun,—came for some happy days to stay with us. Grandmother grew quite glad and young again while looking on these little ones, and as for me I gave them all my heart, though really it is your's and your's alone. But hearts, you know, are wonderfully made; they're like the sun who sends his rays everywhere, and loses neither warmth nor light by giving much, but gives to all their due. I loved those little ones so very much. One evening we were sitting quite alone with Theopompus in the women's room, when suddenly we heard a loud, wild noise. The good old Knakias, our faithful slave, just reached the door as all the bolts gave way, and, rushing through the entrance-hall into the peristyle, the andronitis, and so on to us,

crashing the door between, came a troop of soldiers. Grandmother showed them the letter by which Amasis secured our house from all attack and made it a sure refuge, but they laughed the writing to scorn and showed us on their side a document with the crown-prince's seal, in which we were sternly commanded to deliver up Phanes' children at once to this rough troop of men. Theopompus reproved the soldiers for their roughness, telling them that the children came from Corinth and had no connection with Phanes; but the captain of the troop defied and sneered at him, pushed my grandmother rudely away, forced his way into her own apartment, where among her most precious treasures, at the head of her own bed, the two children lay sleeping peacefully, dragged them out of their little beds and took them in an open boat through the cold night-air to the royal city. In a few days we heard the boy was dead. They say he has been killed by Psamtik's orders; and the little girl, so sweet and dear, is lying in a dismal dungeon, and pining for her father and for us. Oh, dearest, isn't it a painful thing that sorrows such as these should come to mar our perfect happiness? My eyes weep joy and sorrow in the same moment, and my lips, which have just been laughing with you, have now to tell you this sad story."

"I feel your pain with you, my child, but it makes my hand clench with rage instead of filling my eyes with tears. That gentle boy whom you loved, that little girl who now sits weeping in the dark dungeon, shall both be revenged. Trust me; before the Nile has risen again, a powerful army will have entered Egypt, to demand satisfaction for this murder."

"Oh, dearest, how your eyes are glowing! I never

saw you look so beautiful before. Yes, yes, the boy must be avenged, and none but you must be his avenger."

"My gentle Sappho is becoming warlike too."

"Yes, women must feel warlike when wickedness is so triumphant; women rejoice too when such crimes are punished. Tell me has war been declared already?"

"Not yet; but hosts on hosts are marching to the valley of the Euphrates to join our main army."

"My courage sinks as quickly as it rose. I tremble at the word, the mere word, war. How many childless mothers Ares makes, how many young fair heads must wear the widow's veil, how many pillows are wet through with tears when Pallas takes her shield."

"But a man developes in war; his heart expands, his arm grows strong. And none rejoice more than you when he returns a conqueror from the field. The wife of a Persian, especially, ought to rejoice in the thought of battle, for her husband's honor and fame are dearer to her than his life."

"Go to the war. I shall pray for you there."

"And victory will be with the right. First we will conquer Pharaoh's host, then release Phanes' little daughter . . ."

"And then Aristomachus, the brave old man who succeeded Phanes when he fled. He has vanished, no one knows whither, but people say that the crown-prince has either imprisoned him in a dismal dungeon on account of his having uttered threats of retaliating the cruelty shown to Phanes' children, or—what would be worse—has had him dragged off to some distant quarry. The poor old man was exiled from his home, not for his own fault, but by the malice of his enemies, and the

very day on which we lost sight of him an embassy arrived here from the Spartan people recalling Aristomachus to the Eurotas with all the honors Greece could bestow, because his sons had brought great glory to their country. A ship wreathed with flowers was sent to fetch the honored old man, and at the head of the deputation was his own brave, strong son, now crowned with glory and fame."

"I know him. He's a man of iron. Once he mutilated himself cruelly to avoid disgrace. By the Anahita star,* which is setting so beautifully in the east, he shall be revenged!"

"Oh, can it be so late? To me the time has gone by like a sweet breeze, which kissed my forehead and passed away. Did not you hear some one call? They will be waiting for us, and you must be at your friend's house in the town before dawn. Good-bye, my brave hero."

"Good-bye, my dearest one. In five days we shall hear our marriage-hymn. But you tremble as if we were going to battle instead of to our wedding."

"I'm trembling at the greatness of our joy; one always trembles in expectation of anything unusually great."

"Hark, Rhodopis is calling again; let us go. I have asked Theopompus to arrange everything about our wedding with her according to the usual custom; and I shall remain in his house incognito until I can carry you off as my own dear wife."

"And I will go with you."

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* See note 72.

The next morning, as the three friends were walking with their host in his garden, Zopyrus exclaimed: "Why, Bartja, I've been dreaming all night of your Sappho. What a lucky fellow you are! Why I fancied my new wife in Sardis was no end of a beauty until I saw Sappho, and now when I think of her she seems like an owl. If Araspes could see Sappho he would be obliged to confess that even Panthea had been outdone at last. Such a creature was never made before. Auramazda is an awful spendthrift; he might have made three beauties out of Sappho. And how charmingly it sounded when she said 'good-night' to us in Persian."

"While I was away," said Bartja, "she has been taking a great deal of trouble to learn Persian from the wife of a Babylonian carpet-merchant, a native of Susa, who is living at Naukratis, in order to surprise me."

"Yes, she is a glorious girl," said Theopompus. "My late wife loved the little one as if she had been her own child. She would have liked to have had her as a wife for our son who manages the affairs of my house at Miletus, but the gods have ordained otherwise! Ah, how glad she would have been to see the wedding garland at Rhodopis' door!"

"Is it the custom here to ornament a bride's house with flowers?" said Zopyrus.

"Certainly," answered Theopompus. "When you see a door hung with flowers you may always know that house contains a bride; an olive-branch is a sign that a boy has just come into the world, and a strip of woollen cloth hanging over the gate that a girl has been born; but a vessel of water before the door is the token

of death.[94]—But business-hour at the market is very near, my friends, and I must leave you, as I have affairs of great importance to transact."

"I will accompany you," said Zopyrus, "I want to order some garlands for Rhodopis' house."

"Aha," laughed the Milesian. "I see, you want to talk to the flower-girls again. Come, it's of no use to deny. Well, if you like you can come with me, but don't be so generous as you were yesterday, and don't forget that if certain news of war should arrive, your disguise may prove dangerous."

The Greek then had his sandals fastened on by his slaves and started for the market, accompanied by Zopyrus. In a few hours he returned with such a serious expression on his usually cheerful face, that it was easy to see something very important had happened.

"I found the whole town in great agitation," he said to the two friends who had remained at home; "there is a report that Amasis is at the point of death. We had all met on the place of exchange[95] in order to settle our business, and I was on the point of selling all my stored goods at such high prices as to secure me a first-rate profit, with which, when the prospect of an important war had lowered prices again, I could have bought in fresh goods—you see it stands me in good stead to know your royal brother's intentions so early—when suddenly the Toparch appeared among us, and announced that Amasis was not only seriously ill, but that the physicians had given up all hope, and he himself felt he was very

94. Schömann, *Privatalterthümer*. Water before a house. Schol. Arist. *Nub*. v. 837.

95. On the so-called δεῖγμα of the exchange the Greek wholesale merchants were accustomed to sell their wares by samples. Böckh, *Staatshaushaltung der Athener* I. p. 84. 85.

near death. We must hold ourselves in readiness for this at any moment, and for a very serious change in the face of affairs. The death of Amasis is the severest loss that could happen to us Greeks; he was always our friend, and favored us whenever he could, while his son is our avowed enemy and will do his utmost to expel us from the country. If his father had allowed, and he himself had not felt so strongly the importance and value of our mercenary troops, he would have turned us hateful foreigners out long ago. Naukratis and its temples are odious to him. When Amasis is dead our town will hail Cambyses' army with delight, for I have had experience already, in my native town Miletus, that you are accustomed to show respect to those who are not Persians and to protect their rights."

"Yes," said Bartja, "I will take care that all your ancient liberties shall be confirmed by my brother and new ones granted you."

"Well, I only hope he will soon be here," exclaimed the Greek, "for we know that Psamtik, as soon as he possibly can, will order our temples, which are an abomination to him, to be demolished. The building of a place of sacrifice for the Greeks at Memphis has long been put a stop to."

"But here," said Darius, "we saw a number of splendid temples as we came up from the harbor."

"Oh, yes, we have several.*—Ah, there comes Zopyrus; the slaves are carrying a perfect grove of garlands behind him. He's laughing so heartily, he must have amused himself famously with the flower-girls.—Good-morning, my friend. The sad news which fills all Naukratis does not seem to disturb you much."

* See vol. 1. note 2.

"Oh, for anything I care, Amasis may go on living a hundred years yet. But if he dies now, people will have something else to do beside looking after us. When do you set off for Rhodopis' house, friends?"

"At dusk."

"Then please, ask her to accept these flowers from me. I never thought I could have been so taken by an old woman before. Every word she says sounds like music, and though she speaks so gravely and wisely it's as pleasant to the ear as a merry joke. But I shan't go with you this time, Bartja; I should only be in the way. Darius, what have you made up your mind to do?"

"I don't want to lose one chance of a conversation with Rhodopis."

"Well, I don't blame you. You're all for learning and knowing everything, and I'm for enjoying. Friends, what do you say to letting me off this evening? You see . . ."

"I know all about it," interrupted Bartja laughing: "You've only seen the flower-girls by daylight as yet, and you would like to know how they look by lamplight."

"Yes, that's it," said Zopyrus, putting on a grave face. "On that point I am quite as eager after knowledge as Darius."

"Well, we wish you much pleasure with your three sisters."

"No, no, not all three, if you please; Stephanion, the youngest, is my favorite."

Morning had already dawned when Bartja, Darius

and Theopompus left Rhodopis' house. Syloson,[96] a Greek noble who had been banished from his native land by his own brother, Polykrates the tyrant, had been spending the evening with them, and was now returning in their company to Naukratis, where he had been living many years.

This man, though an exile, was liberally supplied with money by his brother, kept the most brilliant establishment in Naukratis, and was as famous for his extravagant hospitality as for his strength and cleverness. Syloson was a very handsome man too, and so remarkable for the good taste and splendor of his dress, that the youth of Naukratis prided themselves on imitating the cut and hang of his robes. Being unmarried, he spent many of his evenings at Rhodopis' house, and had been told the secret of her granddaughter's betrothal.

On that evening it had been settled, that in four days the marriage should be celebrated with the greatest privacy. Bartja had formally betrothed himself to Sappho by eating a quince with her, on the same day on which she had offered sacrifices to Zeus, Hera, and the other deities who protected marriage.[97] The wedding-banquet was to be given at the house of Theopompus, which was looked upon as the bridegroom's.[98] The prince's costly

96. Herod. III. 39. 139. 141.

97. Zeus and Hera are the only divinities mentioned by Diodorus (V. 73.) as receiving marriage-offerings. Plutarch says (Solon. 20.) that the Athenian brides were bound by one of Solon's laws to eat a quince before the nuptial ceremony. The quince (μῆλον κυδώνιον) seems in other respects also to have had significance for lovers. That a period of betrothal existed among the Greeks, as with ourselves, is certain. As an instance we need only remind our readers of Sophocles' Antigone, and her betrothal with Haemon.

98. See Böttiger, *Aldobr. Hochzeit* p. 142. where the nuptial hymn or Hymenaeus is sung accompanied by the flute. It cannot be clearly

bridal presents had been entrusted to Rhodopis' care, and Bartja had insisted on renouncing the paternal inheritance which belonged to his bride and on transferring it to Rhodopis, notwithstanding her determined resistance.

Syloson accompanied the friends to Rhodopis' house, and was just about to leave them, when a loud noise in the streets broke the quiet stillness of the night, and soon after, a troop of the watch passed by, taking a man to prison. The prisoner seemed highly indignant, and the less his broken Greek oaths and his utterances in some other totally unintelligible language were understood by the Egyptian guards, the more violent he became.

Directly Bartja and Darius heard the voice they ran up, and recognized Zopyrus at once.

Syloson and Theopompus stopped the guards, and asked what their captive had done. The officer on duty recognized them directly; indeed every child in Naukratis knew the Milesian merchant and the brother of the tyrant Polykrates by sight; and he answered at once, with a respectful salutation, that the foreign youth they were leading away had been guilty of murder.

Theopompus then took him on one side and endeavored, by liberal promises, to obtain the freedom of the prisoner. The man, however, would concede nothing

determined, who carried the bridal torches. K. F. Hermann, *Privatalterthümer* §. 31. It is also uncertain whether the marriage-feast was held in the house of the bride or the bridegroom, as passages can be quoted to prove both. For want of the bridegroom's house we have been unable to describe all the customs usual at a marriage, as for instance the procession thither, when the carriage conveying the bride was accompanied by a chorus singing the "carriage-song" ἁμάτειον μέλος) and preceded by female attendants carrying lighted torches.

but a permission to speak with his captive. Meanwhile his friends begged Zopyrus to tell them at once what had happened, and heard the following story: The thoughtless fellow had visited the flower-girls at dusk and remained till dawn. He had scarcely closed their house-door on his way home, when he found himself surrounded by a number of young men, who had probably been lying in wait for him, as he had already had a quarrel with one of them, who called himself the betrothed lover of Stephanion, on that very morning. The girl had told her troublesome admirer to leave her flowers alone, and had thanked Zopyrus for threatening to use personal violence to the intruder. When the young Achæmenide found himself surrounded, he drew his sword and easily dispersed his adversaries, as they were only armed with sticks, but chanced to wound the jealous lover, who was more violent than the rest, so seriously, that he fell to the ground. Meanwhile the watch had come up, and as Zopyrus' victim howled "thieves" and "murder" incessantly, they proceeded to arrest the offender. This was not so easy. His blood was up, and rushing on them with his drawn sword, he had already cut his way through the first troop when a second came up. He was not to be daunted, attacked them too, split the skull of one, wounded another in the arm and was taking aim for a third blow, when he felt a cord round his neck. It was drawn tighter and tighter till at last he could not breathe and fell down insensible. By the time he came to his senses he was bound, and notwithstanding all his appeals to his pass and the name of Theopompus, was forced to follow his captors.

When the tale was finished the Milesian did not attempt to conceal his strong disapprobation, and told

Zopyrus that his most unseasonable love of fighting might be followed by the saddest consequences. After saying this, he turned to the officer and begged him to accept his own personal security for the prisoner. The other, however, refused gravely, saying he might forfeit his own life by doing so, as a law existed in Egypt by which the concealer of a murder was condemned to death.[99] He must, he assured them, take the culprit to Sais and deliver him over to the Nomarch* for punishment. "He has murdered an Egyptian," were his last words, and must therefore be tried by an Egyptian supreme court. In any other case I should be delighted to render you any service in my power."

During this conversation Zopyrus had been begging his friends not to take any trouble about him. "By Mithras," he cried, when Bartja offered to declare himself to the Egyptians as a means of procuring his freedom, "I vow I'll stab myself without a second thought, if you give yourselves up to those dogs of Egyptians. Why the whole town is talking about the war already, and do you think that if Psamtik knew he'd got such splendid game in his net, he would let you loose? He would keep you as hostages, of course. No, no, my friends. Good-bye; may Auramazda send you his best blessings! and don't quite forget the jovial Zopyrus, who lived and died for love and war."

The captain of the band placed himself at the head of his men, gave the order to march, and in a few minutes Zopyrus was out of sight.

99. The man who concealed a murder was to be punished with the knout (ἔδει μαστιγοῦσθαι) and left three days and nights without food or drink. Diod. I. 77.

* See vol. I. note 140.

CHAPTER XI.

ACCORDING to the law of Egypt, Zopyrus had deserved death.

As soon as his friends heard this, they resolved to go to Sais and try to rescue him by stratagem. Syloson, who had friends there and could speak the Egyptian language well, offered to help them.

Bartja and Darius disguised themselves so completely by dyeing their hair and eyebrows and wearing broad-brimmed felt-hats,[100] that they could scarcely recognize each other. Theopompus provided them with ordinary Greek dresses, and, an hour after Zopyrus' arrest, they met the splendidly-got-up Syloson on the shore of the Nile, entered a boat belonging to him and manned by his slaves, and, after a short sail, favored by the wind, reached Sais,—which lay above the waters of the inundation like an island,—before the burning midsummer sun had reached its noonday height.

They disembarked at a remote part of the town and walked across the quarter appropriated to the artisans. The workmen were busy at their calling, notwithstanding the intense noonday heat. The baker's men were at work in the open court of the bakehouse, kneading

100. These felt hats (πέταδος, petasus) were used as a protection from the rays of the sun, first among the Greeks, later by the Romans, and, as the sun-light in Egypt is especially dazzling, must certainly have been adopted by the Hellenic settlers on the Nile. Almost all the horsemen in the celebrated procession from the Parthenon (now in the British Museum) are represented with the Petasus. It was most generally used as a travelling-hat. A figure with a broad-brimmed hat on his back was meant to represent a traveller. Compare the way in which pilgrims are represented in the pictures of the middle ages.

bread—the coarser kind of dough with the feet, the finer with the hands. Loaves of various shapes were being drawn out of the ovens—round and oval cakes, and rolls in the form of sheep, snails and hearts. These were laid in baskets, and the nimble baker's boys would put three, four, or even five such baskets on their heads at once, and carry them off quickly and safely to the customers living in other quarters of the city.[101] A butcher was slaughtering an ox before his house, the creature's legs having been pinioned; and his men were busy sharpening their knives to cut up a wild goat.[102] Merry cobblers[103] were calling out to the passers-by from their stalls; carpenters, tailors, joiners and weavers[104] were all there, busy at their various callings. The wives of the work-people were going out marketing, leading their naked children by the hand, and some soldiers were loitering near a man who was offering beer and wine for sale.[105]

101. The life and manners of the working classes are often represented on the ancient monuments, and very vividly, especially in the tombs of Sakkara and the rock-sepulchres of Beni-hassan and Thebes. See Wilkinson, vols. 2. 3. Rosellini, *Mon. Civil.* T. 41. &c. Especially for the bakers see Genesis 40. 16. Herod. II. 36. Ebers, *Aegypten* I. p. 330 and following.

102. Butchers. Wilkinson II. 375. Dümichen, *Resultate*, T. VIII. and XI. Ebers, *Aegypten in Bild und Wort.* I. p. 155.

103. Shoemakers. Wilkinson III. 160.

104. Workers in wood. Wilkinson III. 144. 174. 183. Weavers II. 60. III. 134. 135. Rosellini, *Mon. Civil.* T. 41. and following. Lepsius, *Denkmäler* II. 126 from Benihassan. In the Berlin Museum there are some ancient Egyptian spindles, and in the Museum at Leyden is a beautiful thread-winder with red thread still wound round it, besides several specimens of ancient Egyptian stuffs.

105. The Egyptian beer, called by the Greeks (ζύθος) Zythos (Zythum), was well known among the ancients, but not much esteemed by them. It was said, like wine, to have been given to men by Osiris. Diod. I. 34. The best was brewed in Pelusium. Columella X. 116. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* XXII. 82. This beer is often mentioned in the ancient Egyptian writings and called "Hek." A special kind was

But our friends took very little notice of what was going on in the streets through which they passed; they followed Syloson in silence.

At the Greek guard-house he asked them to wait for him. Syloson, happening to know the Taxiarch who was on duty that day, went in and asked him if he had heard anything of a man accused of murder having been brought from Naukratis to Sais that morning.

"Of course," said the Greek. "It's not more than half an hour since he arrived. As they found a purse full of money in his girdle, they think he must be a Persian spy. I suppose you know that Cambyses is preparing for war with Egypt."

"Impossible!"

"No, no, it's a fact. The prince-regent has already received information. A caravan of Arabian merchants arrived yesterday at Pelusium, and brought the news."

"It will prove as false as their suspicions about this poor young Lydian. I know him well, and am very sorry for the poor fellow. He belongs to one of the richest families in Sardis, and only ran away for fear of the powerful satrap Oroetes, with whom he had had a quarrel. I'll tell you the particulars when you come to see me next in Naukratis. Of course you'll stay a few days and bring some friends. My brother has sent me some wine which beats everything I ever tasted. It's perfect nectar, and I confess I grudge offering it to any one who's not, like you, a perfect judge in such matters."

The Taxiarch's face brightened up at these words,

called Hek nezem, sweet beer. It may be interesting to notice that a connection has been found between Gambrinus and Egypt, the earliest beer-drinking country. It is said, namely, in the Aventinus *Annal. Boj.* I. 6. 11. that Gambrinus was the son of Isis. On intoxication, see Vol. I. note 132.

and grasping Syloson's hand, he exclaimed. "By the dog,* my friend, we shall not wait to be asked twice; we'll come soon enough and take a good pull at your wine-skins. How would it be if you were to ask Archidice,[106] the three flower-sisters, and a few flute-playing-girls to supper?"

"They shall all be there. By the bye, that reminds me that the flower-girls were the cause of that poor young Lydian's imprisonment. Some jealous idiot attacked him before their house with a number of comrades. The hot-brained young fellow defended himself . . . ."

"And knocked the other down?"

"Yes; and so that he'll never get up again."

"The boy must be a good boxer."

"He had a sword."

"So much the better for him."

"No, so much the worse; for his victim was an Egyptian."

"That's a bad job. I fear it can only have an unfortunate end. A foreigner, who kills an Egyptian, is as sure of death as if he had the rope already round his neck.[107] However, just now he'll get a few days' grace; the priests are all so busy praying for the dying king that they have no time to try criminals."

"I'd give a great deal to be able to save that poor fellow. I know his father."

"Yes, and then after all he only did his duty. A man must defend himself."

106. A celebrated Hetaira of Naukratis mentioned by Herod. II. 135. Flute-playing girls were seldom missing at the young Greeks' drinking-parties.

107. Criminals in Egypt were often hung. Genesis 40, 20–23. Rosellini, *Mon. Civ.* T. 124.

* See vol. I. note 186.

"Do you happen to know where he is imprisoned?"

"Of course I do. The great prison is under repair, and so he has been put for the present in the store-house between the principal guard-house of the Egyptian body-guard and the sacred grove of the temple of Neith. I have only just come home from seeing them take him there."

"He is strong and has plenty of courage; do you think he could get away, if we helped him?"

"No, it would be quite impossible; he's in a room two stories high; the only window looks into the sacred grove, and that, you know, is surrounded by a ten-foot wall, and guarded like the treasury. There are double sentries at every gate. There's only one place where it is left unguarded during the inundation season, because, just here, the water washes the walls. These worshippers of animals are as cautious as water-wag-tails."

"Well, it's a great pity, but I suppose we must leave the poor fellow to his fate. Good-bye, Dæmones; don't forget my invitation."

The Samian left the guard-room and went back directly to the two friends, who were waiting impatiently for him.

They listened eagerly to his tidings, and when he had finished his description of the prison, Darius exclaimed: "I believe a little courage will save him. He's as nimble as a cat, and as strong as a bear. I have thought of a plan."

"Let us hear it," said Syloson, "and let me give an opinion as to its practicability."

"We will buy some rope-ladders, some cord, and a good bow, put all these into our boat, and row to the

unguarded part of the temple-wall at dusk. You must then help me to clamber over it. I shall take the things over with me and give the eagle's cry. Zopyrus will know at once, because, since we were children, we have been accustomed to use it when we were riding or hunting together. Then I shall shoot an arrow, with the cord fastened to it, up into his window, (I never miss), tell him to fasten a weight to it and let it down again to me. I shall then secure the rope-ladder to the cord, Zopyrus will draw the whole affair up again, and hang it on an iron nail,—which, by the bye, I must not forget to send up with the ladder, for who knows whether he may have such a thing in his cell. He will then come down on it, go quickly with me to the part of the wall where you will be waiting with the boat, and where there must be another rope-ladder, spring into the boat, and there he is—safe!"

"First-rate, first-rate!" cried Bartja.

"But very dangerous," added Syloson. "If we are caught in the sacred grove, we are certain to be severely punished. The priests hold strange nightly festivals there, at which every one but the initiated is strictly forbidden to appear. I believe, however, that these take place on the lake,* and that is at some distance from Zopyrus' prison."

"So much the better," cried Darius; "but now to the main point. We must send at once, and ask Theopompus to hire a fast trireme for us, and have it put in sailing order at once. The news of Cambyses' preparations have already reached Egypt; they take us for spies, and will be sure not to let either Zopyrus or his deliverers escape, if they can help it. It would be a

* See vol. I. note 150, and vol. II. note 162.

criminal rashness to expose ourselves uselessly to danger. Bartja, you must take this message yourself, and must marry Sappho this very day, for, come what may, we must leave Naukratis to-morrow. Don't contradict me, my friend, my brother! You know our plan, and you must see that as only one can act in it, your part would be that of a mere looker-on. As it was my own idea I am determined to carry it out myself. We shall meet again to-morrow, for Auramazda protects the friendship of the pure."

It was a long time before they could persuade Bartja to leave his friends in the lurch, but their entreaties and representations at last took effect, and he went down towards the river to take a boat for Naukratis, Darius and Syloson going at the same time to buy the necessary implements for their plan.

In order to reach the place where boats were to be hired, Bartja had to pass by the temple of Neith. This was not easy, as an immense crowd was assembled at the entrance-gates. He pushed his way as far as the obelisks near the great gate of the temple with its winged sun-disc and fluttering pennons, but there the temple-servants prevented him from going farther; they were keeping the avenue of sphinxes clear for a procession.* The gigantic doors of the Pylon opened, and Bartja, who, in spite of himself, had been pushed into the front row, saw a brilliant procession come out of the temple. The unexpected sight of many faces he had formerly known occupied his attention so much, that he scarcely noticed the loss of his broad-brimmed hat, which had been knocked off in the crowd. From the conversation of two Ionian mercenaries behind him he

* See vol. I. note 149.

learnt that the family of Amasis had been to the temple to pray for the dying king.

The procession was headed by richly-decorated priests, either wearing long white robes or panther-skins. They were followed by men holding office at the court, and carrying golden staves, on the ends of which peacocks' feathers and silver lotus-flowers were fastened, and these by Pastophori,[108] carrying on their shoulders a golden cow, the animal sacred to Isis. When the crowd had bowed down before this sacred symbol, the queen appeared. She was dressed in priestly robes and wore a costly head-dress with the winged disc and the Uræus. In her left hand she held a sacred golden sistrum,[109] the tones of which were to scare away

108. These were priests whose duty it was to carry the sacred animals and representations of the divinities at the religious processions. According to Clemens of Alexandria, *Strom.* VI. 663. and the bilingual stone of Rosetta, the priesthood was divided into high-priests, prophets, stolists,—to whom were entrusted the pictures and statues of the gods, the sacrifices and the office of teaching; those who had a right to wear the feather—writers of the sacred mystic cipher—hierogrammatists or sages (in Egyptian: "things having knowledge") to which order belonged the astronomers, astrologers, soothsayers and calendar-makers—the holy fathers, amongst whom the singers were reckoned and those who kept the precepts and rules of the royal life, and lastly the inferior priests, namely, the Pastophori, (bearers of the sacred pictures, statues and symbols in the processions), the Taricheuti or embalmers, the Neokori or temple-servants, &c. For details see Ebers, *Aegypten* p. 341. and following.

109. A musical instrument used in religious services, and often ornamented with much skill and art. It consisted of a bow with bars, and rings on the bars which could be sounded together. Plutarch describes it very exactly (Is. and Os. 63.), says it was used to scare away Typhon, and that on the rounded part of the metal was the likeness of a cat with human features. His description is confirmed by a bronze sistrum in the Berlin Museum, on the bend of which is a cat with the sun-disc over its head. On the handle of another is a double Isis-mask. See also Wilkinson I. 145. This instrument is said to have been used in the Egyptian war-music also, (Virgil. *Aen.* VIII. 696.) but the statement that it served instead of the trumpet is incorrect, as we see from the monuments that the trumpet was also in use. *Prop. III.* 11. 43.

Typhon, and in her right some lotus-flowers. The wife, daughter and sister of the high-priest followed her, in similar but less splendid ornaments.[110] Then came the heir to the throne, in rich robes of state, as priest and prince; and behind him four young priests in white carrying Tachot, (the daughter of Amasis and Ladice and the pretended sister of Nitetis,) in an open litter. The heat of the day, and the earnestness of her prayers, had given the sick girl a slight color. Her blue eyes, filled with tears, were fixed on the sistrum which her weak, emaciated hands had hardly strength to hold.

A murmur of compassion ran through the crowd; for they loved their dying king, and manifested openly and gladly the sympathy so usually felt for young lives from whom a brilliant future has been snatched by disease. Such was Amasis' young, fading daughter, who was now being carried past them, and many an eye grew dim as the beautiful invalid came in sight. Tachot seemed to notice this, for she raised her eyes from the sistrum and looked kindly and gratefully at the crowd. Suddenly the color left her face, she turned deadly pale, and the golden sistrum fell on to the stone pavement with a clang, close to Bartja's feet. He felt that he had been recognized and for one moment thought of hiding himself in the crowd; but only for one moment;—his chivalrous feeling gained the day, he darted forward, picked up the sistrum, and

110. Similar processions of women are to be found on the monuments, as, for example, at Thebes, where the wife of Rameses the Great and the mother, daughter and sister of a priest are going up to prayer. Wilkinson I. 260. The question whether these were priestesses or not has also been decided in the affirmative by the monuments, especially the bi-lingual tablet of Canopus.

forgetting the danger in which he was placing himself, held it out to the princess.

Tachot looked at him earnestly before taking the golden sistrum from his hands, and then said, in a low voice, which only he could understand: "Are you Bartja? Tell me,—in your mother's name—are you Bartja?"

"Yes, I am," was his answer, in a voice as low as her own, "your friend, Bartja."

He could not say more, for the priests pushed him back among the crowd. When he was in his old place, he noticed that Tachot, whose bearers had begun to move on again, was looking round at him. The color had come back into her cheeks, and her bright eyes were trying to meet his. He did not avoid them; she threw him a lotus-bud—he stooped to pick it up, and then broke his way through the crowd, for this hasty act had roused their attention.

A quarter of an hour later, he was seated in the boat which was to take him to Sappho and to his wedding. He was quite at ease now about Zopyrus. In Bartja's eyes his friend was already as good as saved, and in spite of the dangers which threatened himself, he felt strangely calm and happy, he could hardly say why.

Meanwhile the sick princess had been carried home, had had her oppressive ornaments taken off, and her couch carried on to one of the palace-balconies where she liked best to pass the hot summer days, sheltered by broad-leaved plants[111] and a kind of awning.

From this veranda, she could look down into the

111. Wilkinson II. 121. 129. From representations found in Thebes

great fore-court of the palace, which was planted with trees. To-day it was full of priests, courtiers, generals and governors of provinces. Anxiety and suspense were expressed in every face: Amasis' last hour was drawing very near.

Tachot could not be seen from below; but listening with feverish eagerness, she could hear much that was said. Now that they had to dread the loss of their king, every one, even the priests, were full of his praises. The wisdom and circumspection of his plans and modes of government, his unwearied industry, the moderation he had always shown, the keenness of his wit, were, each and all, subjects of admiration. "How Egypt has prospered under Amasis' government!" said a Nomarch. "And what glory he gained for our arms, by the conquest of Cyprus and the war with the Libyans!" cried one of the generals. "How magnificently he embellished our temples, and what great honors he paid to the goddess of Sais!" exclaimed one of the singers of Neith. "And then how gracious and condescending he was!" murmured a courtier. "How cleverly he managed to keep peace with the great powers!" said the secretary of state, and the treasurer, wiping away a tear, cried: "How thoroughly he understood the management of the revenue! Since the reign of Rameses III. the treasury has not been so well filled as now."[112] "Psamtik comes into a fine inheritance,"

112. Rhampsinit, of whose treasure-house Herodotus (II. 121. 122.) tells the amusing story which has been dramatized by Count Platen. We can hardly believe Appian when he says that the treasury of Ptolemy Philadelphus contained 740,000 Egyptian talents, for this, even if we reckon the Egyptian talent at half the value of the Aeginetan, would give the sum of £83,250,000. Perhaps Böckh (Staatshaushalt d. Ath. I. p. 14.) is right in his conjecture, that this sum represented the total receipts of his reign of 38 years. There is said, however, to

lisped the courtier, and the soldier exclaimed, "Yes, but it's to be feared that he'll not spend it in a glorious war; he's too much under the influence of the priests." "No, you are wrong there," answered the temple-singer. "For some time past, our lord and master has seemed to disdain the advice of his most faithful servants." "The successor of such a father will find it difficult to secure universal approbation," said the Nomarch. "It is not every one who has the intellect, the good fortune and the wisdom of Amasis." "The gods know that!" murmured the warrior with a sigh.

Tachot's tears flowed fast. These words were a confirmation of what they had been trying to hide from her: she was to lose her dear father soon.

After she had made this dreadful certainty clear to her own mind, and discovered that it was in vain to beg her attendants to carry her to her dying father, she left off listening to the courtiers below, and began looking at the sistrum which Bartja himself had put into her hand, and which she had brought on to the balcony with her, as if seeking comfort there. And she found what she sought; for it seemed to her as if the sound of its sacred rings bore her away into a smiling, sunny landscape.

have been an inscription on the treasury of Rameses the Great (Osymandyas) to the effect that the gold and silver mines of Egypt yielded a yearly revenue of 32 million minæ or £90,000,000. Diod. I. 49. According to the same historian (I. 62,) the treasury of Rhampsinit contained four million talents, which, reckoning as before in Egyptian talents, would give £450,000,000. By a fortunate chance a representation of this rich king's treasure-house, so celebrated through the before-mentioned tale, has come down to us. It is in the temple of Medinet Haboo and has been published by Dümichen in his *Historischen Inschriften Altägyptischer Denkmäler*, Taff. XXX. and following. The mass of treasure represented is really enormous, in gold, silver, copper, and even Arabian spices. The precious metals are stored in sacks, vases, and heaps; the baser in bars.

That faintness which so often comes over people in decline, had seized her and was sweetening her last hours with pleasant dreams.

The female slaves, who stood round to fan away the flies, said afterwards that Tachot had never looked so lovely.

She had lain about an hour in this state, when her breathing became more difficult, a slight cough made her breast heave, and the bright red blood trickled down from her lips on to her white robe. She awoke, and looked surprised and disappointed on seeing the faces round her. The sight of her mother, however, who came on to the veranda at that moment, brought a smile to her face, and she said, "O mother, I have had such a beautiful dream."

"Then our visit to the temple has done my dear child good?" asked the queen, trembling at the sight of the blood on the sick girl's lips.

"Oh, yes, mother, so much! for I saw him again."

Ladice's glance at the attendants seemed to ask: "Has your poor mistress lost her senses?" Tachot understood the look and said, evidently speaking with great difficulty: "You think I am wandering, mother. No, indeed, I really saw and spoke to him. He gave me my sistrum again, and said he was my friend, and then he took my lotus-bud and vanished. Don't look so distressed and surprised, mother. What I say is really true; it is no dream.—There, you hear, Tentrut saw him too. He must have come to Sais for my sake, and so the child-oracle in the temple-court did not deceive me, after all. And now I don't feel anything more of my illness; I dreamt I was lying in a field of blooming poppies, as red as the blood of the

young lambs that are offered in sacrifice; Bartja was sitting by my side, and Nitetis was kneeling close to us and playing wonderful songs on a Nabla* made of ivory. And there was such a lovely sound in the air that I felt as if Horus, the beautiful god of morning, spring, and the resurrection, was kissing me. Yes, mother, I tell you he is coming soon, and when I am well, then—then—ah, mother what is this? . . . I am dying!"

Ladice knelt down by her child's bed and pressed her lips in burning kisses on the girl's eyes as they grew dim in death.

An hour later she was standing by another bedside—her dying husband's.

Severe suffering had disfigured the king's features, the cold perspiration was standing on his forehead, and his hands grasped the golden lions[113] on the arms of the deep-seated invalid chair in which he was resting, almost convulsively.

When Ladice came in he opened his eyes; they were as keen and intelligent as if he had never lost his sight.

"Why do not you bring Tachot to me?" he asked in a dry voice.

"She is too ill, and suffers so much, that . . ."

"She is dead! Then it is well with her, for death is not punishment; it is the end and aim of life,—the only end that we can attain without effort, but through sufferings!—the gods alone know how great. Osiris has taken her to himself, for she was innocent. And Nitetis is dead too. Where is Nebenchari's letter?—

113. From Wilkinson and Rosellini. See also, Vol. I. note 133.

* An ancient Egyptian stringed instrument.

Here is the place: 'She took her own life, and died calling down a heavy curse on thee and thine. The poor, exiled, scorned and plundered oculist Nebenchari in Babylon sends thee this intelligence to Egypt. It is as true as his own hatred of thee.' Listen to these words, Psamtik, and remember how on his dying bed thy father told thee that, for every drachm of pleasure purchased on earth by wrong-doing, the dying bed will be burdened by a talent's weight of remorse. Fearful misery is coming on Egypt for Nitetis' sake. Cambyses is preparing to make war on us. He will sweep down on Egypt like a scorching wind from the desert. Much, which I have staked my nightly sleep and the very marrow of my existence to bring into existence, will be annihilated. Still I have not lived in vain. For forty years I have been the careful father and benefactor of a great nation. Children and children's children will speak of Amasis as a great, wise and humane king; they will read my name on the great works which I have built in Sais and Thebes, and will praise the greatness of my power. Neither shall I be condemned by Osiris and the forty-two judges of the nether world; the goddess of truth, who holds the balances,[114] will find that my good deeds outweigh my bad."—Here the king sighed deeply and remained silent for some time. Then, looking tenderly at his wife, he said: "Ladice, thou hast been a faithful, virtuous wife to me. For this I thank thee, and ask thy forgiveness for much. We have often misunderstood

114. The goddess of truth was called the "mistress of the balances," because she weighed the souls of the dead in the lower world. This can be seen in the books of the dead, in nearly all of which the weighing of the soul is represented in the largest vignette (to Chap. 125.).

one another. Indeed it was easier for me to accustom myself to the Greek modes of thought, than for a Greek to understand our Egyptian ideas. Thou know'st my love of Greek art,—thou know'st how I enjoyed the society of thy friend Pythagoras, who was thoroughly initiated in all that we believe and know, and adopted much from us. He comprehended the deep wisdom which lies in the doctrines that I reverence most, and he took care not to speak lightly of truths which our priests are perhaps too careful to hide from the people; for though the many bow down before that which they cannot understand, they would be raised and upheld by those very truths, if explained to them. To a Greek mind our worship of animals presents the greatest difficulty, but to my own the worship of the Creator in his creatures seems more just and more worthy of a human being, than the worship of his likeness in stone. The Greek deities are moreover subject to every human infirmity; indeed I should have made my queen very unhappy by living in the same manner as her great god Zeus."

At these words the king smiled, and then went on: "And what has given rise to this? The Hellenic love of beauty in form, which, in the eye of a Greek, is superior to every thing else. He cannot separate the body from the soul, because he holds it to be the most glorious of formed things, and indeed, believes that a beautiful spirit must necessarily inhabit a beautiful body. Their gods, therefore, are only elevated human beings, but we adore an unseen power working in nature and in ourselves. The animal takes its place between ourselves and nature; its actions are guided, not, like our own, by the letter, but by the eternal laws

of nature,"[115] which owe their origin to the Deity, while the letter is a device of man's own mind. And then, too, where amongst ourselves do we find so earnest a longing and endeavor to gain freedom, the highest good, as among the animals? Where such a regular and well-balanced life from generation to generation, without instruction or precept?"

Here the king's voice failed. He was obliged to pause for a few moments, and then continued: "I know that my end is near; therefore enough of these matters. My son and successor, hear my last wishes and act upon them; they are the result of experience. But alas! how often have I seen, that rules of life given by one man to another are useless. Every man must earn his own experience. His own losses make him prudent, his own learning wise. Thou, my son, art coming to the throne at a mature age; thou hast had time and opportunity to judge between right and wrong, to note what is beneficial and what hurtful, to see and compare many things. I give thee, therefore, only a few wholesome counsels, and only fear that though I offer them with my right hand, thou wilt accept them with the left.

"First, however, I must say that, notwithstanding my blindness, my indifference to what has been going on during the past months has been only apparent. I left you to your own devices with a good intention. Rhodopis told me once one of her teacher Æsop's fables: 'A traveller, meeting a man on his road, asked him how long it would be before he reached the nearest town.' 'Go on, go on,' cried the other. 'But I want to know first when I shall get to the town.' 'Go on,

115. From Anacharsis in Diodorus.

only go on,' was the answer. The traveller left him with angry words and abuse; but he had not gone many steps when the man called after him: 'You will be there in an hour. I could not answer your question until I had seen your pace.'

"I bore this fable in my mind for my son's sake, and watched in silence at what pace he was ruling his people. Now I have discovered what I wish to know, and this is my advice: Examine into everything yourself. It is the duty of every man, but especially of a king, to acquaint himself intimately with all that concerns the weal or woe of his people. You, my son, are in the habit of using the eyes and ears of other men instead of going to the fountain-head yourself. I am sure that your advisers, the priests, only desire what is good; but . . . Neithotep, I must beg you to leave us alone for a few moments."

When the priest was gone the king exclaimed: "They wish for what is good, but good only for themselves. But we are not kings of priests and aristocrats only, we are kings of a nation! Do not listen to the advice of this proud caste alone, but read every petition yourself, and, by appointing Nomarchs devoted to the king and beloved by the people, make yourself acquainted with the needs and wishes of the Egyptian nation. It is not difficult to govern well, if you are aware of the state of feeling in your land. Choose fit men to fill the offices of state. I have taken care that the kingdom shall be properly divided. The laws are good, and have proved themselves so; hold fast by these laws, and trust no one who sets himself above them; for law is invariably wiser than the individual man, and its transgressor deserves his punishment. The people

understand this well, and are ready to sacrifice themselves for us, when they see that we are ready to give up our own will to the law. You do not care for the people. I know their voice is often rude and rough, but it utters wholesome truths, and no one needs to hear truth more than a king. The Pharaoh who chooses priests and courtiers for his advisers, will hear plenty of flattering words, while he who tries to fulfil the wishes of the nation will have much to suffer from those around him; but the latter will feel peace in his own heart, and be praised in the ages to come. I have often erred, yet the Egyptians will weep for me, as one who knew their needs and considered their welfare like a father. A king who really knows his duties, finds it an easy and beautiful task to win the love of the people—an unthankful one to gain the applause of the great—almost an impossibility to content both.

"Do not forget,—I say it again,—that kings and priests exist for the people, and not the people for their kings and priests. Honor religion for its own sake and as the most important means of securing the obedience of the governed to their governors; but at the same time show its promulgators that you look on them, not as receptacles, but as servants, of the Deity. Hold fast, as the law commands, by what is old; but never shut the gates of your kingdom against what is new, if better. Bad men break at once with the old traditions; fools only care for what is new and fresh; the narrow-minded and the selfish privileged class cling indiscriminately to all that is old, and pronounce progress to be a sin; but the wise endeavor to retain all that has approved itself in the past, to remove all that has become defective, and to adopt whatever is good, from whatever

source it may have sprung. Act thus, my son. The priests will try to keep you back—the Greeks to urge you forward. Choose one party or the other, but beware of indecision—of yielding to the one to-day, to the other to-morrow. Between two stools a man falls to the ground. Let the one party be your friends, the other your enemies; by trying to please both, you will have both opposed to you. Human beings hate the man who shows kindness to their enemies. In the last few months, during which you have ruled independently, both parties have been offended by your miserable indecision. The man who runs backwards and forwards like a child, makes no progress, and is soon weary. I have till now—till I felt that death was near—always encouraged the Greeks and opposed the priests. In the active business of life, the clever, brave Greeks seemed to me especially serviceable;—at death, I want men who can make me out a pass into the nether regions. The gods forgive me for not being able to resist words that sound so like a joke, even in my last hour! They created me and must take me as I am. I rubbed my hands for joy when I became king; with thee, my son, coming to the throne is a graver matter.—Now call Neithotep back; I have still something to say to you both."

The king gave his hand to the high-priest as he entered, saying: "I leave you, Neithotep, without ill-will, though my opinion that you have been a better priest than a servant to your king, remains unaltered. Psamtik will probably prove a more obedient follower than I have been, but one thing I wish to impress earnestly on you both: Do not dismiss the Greek mercenaries until the war with the Persians is over, and has ended—

we will hope—in victory for Egypt. My former predictions are not worth anything now; when death draws near, we get depressed, and things begin to look a little black. Without the auxiliary troops we shall be hopelessly lost, but with them victory is not impossible. Be clever; show the Ionians that they are fighting on the Nile for the freedom of their own country—that Cambyses, if victorious, will not be contented with Egypt alone, while his defeat may bring freedom to their own enslaved countrymen in Ionia. I know you agree with me, Neithotep, for in your heart you mean well to Egypt.—Now read me the prayers. I feel exhausted; my end must be very near. If I could only forget that poor Nitetis! had she the right to curse us? May the judges of the dead—may Osiris—have mercy on our souls! Sit down by me, Ladice; lay thy hand on my burning forehead. And Psamtik, in presence of these witnesses, swear to honor and respect thy step-mother, as if thou wert her own child. My poor wife! Come and seek me soon before the throne of Osiris. A widow and childless, what hast thou to do with this world? We brought up Nitetis as our own daughter, and yet we are so heavily punished for her sake. But her curse rests on us—and only on us;—not on thee, Psamtik, nor on thy children. Bring my grandson. Was that a tear? Perhaps; well, the little things to which one has accustomed one's self are generally the hardest to give up."

Rhodopis entertained a fresh guest that evening; Kallias, the son of Phœnippus,* the same who first

* See vol. 1. notes 63 and 69.

appeared in our tale as the bearer of news from the Olympic games.

The lively, cheerful Athenian had just come back from his native country, and, as an old and tried friend, was not only received by Rhodopis, but made acquainted with the secret of Sappho's marriage.

Knakias, her old slave, had, it is true, taken in the flag which was the sign of reception, two days ago; but he knew that Kallias was always welcome to his mistress, and therefore admitted him just as readily as he refused every one else.

The Athenian had plenty to tell, and when Rhodopis was called away on business, he took his favorite Sappho into the garden, joking and teasing her gaily as they looked out for her lover's coming. But Bartja did not come, and Sappho began to be so anxious that Kallias called old Melitta, whose longing looks in the direction of Naukratis were, if possible, more anxious even than those of her mistress, and told her to fetch a musical instrument which he had brought with him.

It was a rather large lute, made of gold and ivory, and as he handed it to Sappho, he said, with a smile: "The inventor of this glorious instrument, the divine Anakreon, had it made expressly for me, at my own wish. He calls it a Barbiton,[116] and brings wonderful tones from its chords—tones that must echo on even into the land of shadows.[117] I have told this poet,

116. Barbitos and Barbiton (βάρβιτος and βάρβιτον). A stringed instrument in use among the Greeks, larger than the ordinary lyre (*Jul. Poll.* IV. 59.) and which seems, as Anthony Rich appropriately says, to have borne the same relation to the usual lute that the violoncello does to the violin. Anakreon accompanied his songs on this instrument, and is said to have invented it. (?)

117. See Vol. I. note 36. and Athen. IV. p. 175. *Griech Blumenlese*, III. 47. (Simonides) 50. 51. (Antipater of Sidon) and others.

who offers his life as one great sacrifice to the Muses, Eros and Dionysus,[118] a great deal about you, and he made me promise to bring you this song, which he wrote on purpose for you, as a gift from himself. Now, listen:

"The Phrygian rock, that braves the storm,
Was once a weeping matron's form;
And Prokne, hapless, frantic maid,
Is now a swallow in the shade.

"Oh! that a mirror's form were mine
To sparkle with that smile divine;
And like my heart I then should be
Reflecting thee, and only thee!

"Or were I, love, the robe which flows
O'er every charm that secret glows,
In many a lucid fold to swim,
And cling and grow to every limb!

"Oh! could I, as the streamlet's wave,
Thy warmly-mellowing beauties lave,
Or float as perfume on thine hair,
And breathe my soul in fragrance there!

"I wish I were the zone that lies,
Warm to thy breast, and feels its sighs!
Or like those envious pearls that show
So faintly round that neck of snow;
Yes I would be a happy gem,
Like them to hang, to fade like them.

"What more would thy Anacreon be?
Oh! anything that touches thee.
Nay, sandals for those airy feet—
Thus to be pressed by thee were sweet!" *

118. See Antipater of Sidon. *Epigram on Anakreon. Griech. Blumenlese* III. 52. and also the following translation by Moore.

"To beauty's smile and wine's delight,
To joys he loved on earth so well,
Still shall his spirit all the night
Attune the wild aërial shell."

* Translated by Moore.

"Are you angry with the poet for his presumption?"

"How could I be? Poets must always be allowed a certain freedom."

"And especially such a poet!"

"Who chooses such a master in the art of song as bearer of his verses."

"You little flatterer! Well, when I was twenty years younger, they had some right to praise my voice and style of singing; but now . . ."

"Now you're trying to get some more praise; you shall not succeed in extorting another word. But I should like to know whether this Barbiton, as you say it is called, with its soft tones, would do as accompaniment for other songs beside Anakreon's?"

"Of course. Take the Plectrum [119] and try its chords yourself; though I fear your delicate fingers will find them a little unmanageable."

"I cannot sing. I feel too anxious at Bartja's remaining so long away."

"Or, in other words, longing for him has taken away your voice. There is a song by your Lesbian aunt, the great Sappho, which just describes the state of mind you are probably in at this moment. Do you know it?"

"No, I think not."

"Then listen. It used to be the song I liked best to show off in. One would think Eros himself and not a woman, had written it.

> "Blest as th'immortal gods is he,
> The youth who fondly sits by thee,
> And hears and sees thee all the while
> Softly speak and sweetly smile.

119. A little ivory stick, which was used in playing on the stringed instruments.

"'Twas that deprived my soul of rest,
And raised such tumults in my breast;
For while I gazed, in transport toss'd,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost,"

"My bosom glow'd; the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame:
On my dim eyes a darkness hung,
My ears with hollow murmurs rung:

"With dewy damp my limbs were chill'd;
My blood with gentle horrors thrilled;
My feeble pulse forgot to play;
I fainted, sank, and died away." [120]

"Now, what do you say to this song? But by Hercules, child, how pale you are! Have the verses affected you so much, or are you frightened at this likeness of your own longing heart? Calm yourself, girl. Who knows what may have happened to keep your lover?"

"Nothing has happened,—nothing," cried a gay, manly voice, and in a few seconds Sappho was in the arms of him she loved.

Kallias looked on quietly, smiling at the wonderful beauty of these two young lovers.

"But now," said the prince, after Sappho had made him acquainted with Kallias, "I must go at once to your grandmother. We dare not wait four days for our wedding. It must be to-day! There is danger in every hour of delay. Is Theopompus here?"

120. This song is the second of the only two odes of Sappho, which have reached us entire. It was preserved by Longinus, and imitated in Latin by Catullus. The English version is by Ambrose Phillips. *Köchly, Academische Vortrage und Reden*, p. 191 believed that the fiery words of the ode were composed to congratulate a young friend of the poetess (Attis) on her approaching nuptials with the man she loved. But the passionate fervor of the song seems to justify our opinion, though we too should expect of Sappho something different from our ordinary congratulatory verses.

"I think he must be," said Sappho. "I know of nothing else, that could keep my grandmother so long in the house. But tell me, what is this about our marriage? It seems to me . . ."

"Let us go in first, love. I fancy a thunder-storm must be coming on. The sky is so dark, and it's so intolerably sultry."

"As you like, only make haste, unless you mean me to die of impatience. There is not the slightest reason to be afraid of a storm. Since I was a child there has not been either lightning or thunder in Egypt at this time of year." [121]

"Then you will see something new to-day," said Kallias, laughing; for a large drop of rain has just fallen on my bald head,—the Nile-swallows were flying close to the water as I came here, and you see there is a cloud coming over the moon already. Come in quickly, or you will get wet. Ho, slave, see that a black lamb is offered to the gods of the lower world." [122]

They found Theopompus sitting in Rhodopis' own apartment, as Sappho had supposed. He had finished telling her the story of Zopyrus' arrest, and of the

121. Thunder-storms do occur in Egypt, though very rarely. One happened when Lepsius was there, *Briefe aus Aegypten*, p. 26. That rain had fallen in Upper Egypt at the date of our tale, is related by Herodotus (III. 10.) as a miracle. We encountered one in January, 1870, near Antinoe in Upper Egypt. It was so violent that Arabian boats were upset on the Nile, and streams rushed down from the arid Arabian mountains. Several fellah huts were washed away, and palm-trees were uprooted. The old governor of the place assured us that he had never witnessed such a storm in his life.

122. When a thunder-storm threatened, the Greeks were accustomed to offer a black lamb to the storms, who were reckoned among the divinities of the lower regions. In the Frogs of Aristophanes, when Aeschylus is beginning a frightfully violent attack on Euripides, Dionysus calls out: "Slaves, bring a lamb, a black lamb, a fearful storm is coming on!" *Frogs* of Aristophanes 853.

journey which Bartja and his friends had taken on his behalf.

Their anxiety on the matter was beginning to be so serious, that Bartja's unexpected appearance was a great relief. His words flew as he repeated the events of the last few hours, and begged Theopompus to look out at once for a ship in sailing order, to convey himself and his friends from Egypt.

"That suits famously," exclaimed Kallias. "My own trireme brought me from Naukratis to-day; it is lying now, fully equipped for sea, in the port, and is quite at your service. I have only to send orders to the steersman to keep the crew together and everything in sailing order.—You are under no obligations to me; on the contrary it is I who have to thank you for the honor you will confer on me. Ho, Knakias!—tell my slave Philomelus,—he's waiting in the hall,—to take a boat to the port, and order my steersman Nausarchus to keep the ship in readiness for starting. Give him this seal; it empowers him to do all that is necessary."

"And my slaves?" said Bartja.

"Knakias can tell my old steward to take them to Kallias' ship," answered Theopompus.

"And when they see this," said Bartja, giving the old servant his ring, "they will obey without a question."

Knakias went away with many a deep obeisance, and the prince went on: "Now, my mother, I have a great petition to ask of you."

"I guess what it is," said Rhodopis, with a smile. "You wish your marriage to be hastened, and I see that I dare not oppose your wish."

"If I'm not mistaken," said Kallias, "we have a

remarkable case here. Two people are in great peril, and find that very peril a matter of rejoicing."

"Perhaps you are right there," said Bartja, pressing Sappho's hand unperceived. And then, turning to Rhodopis again, he begged her to delay no longer in trusting her dearest treasure to his care,—a treasure whose worth he knew so well.

Rhodopis rose, she laid her right hand on Sappho's head and her left on Bartja's, and said: "There is a myth which tells of a blue lake in the land of roses; its waves are sometimes calm and gentle, but at others they rise into a stormy flood; the taste of its waters is partly sweet as honey, partly bitter as gall. Ye will learn the meaning of this legend in the marriage-land of roses. Ye will pass calm and stormy—sweet and bitter hours there. So long as thou wert a child, Sappho, thy life passed on like a cloudless spring morning, but when thou becam'st a maiden, and hadst learnt to love, thine heart was opened to admit pain; and during the long months of separation pain was a frequent guest there. This guest will seek admission as long as life lasts. Bartja, it will be your duty to keep this intruder away from Sappho, as far as it lies in your power. I know the world. I could perceive, —even before Crœsus told me of your generous nature, —that you were worthy of my Sappho. This justified me in allowing you to eat the quince* with her; this induces me now to entrust to you, without fear, what I have always looked upon as a sacred pledge committed to my keeping. Look upon her too only as a loan. Nothing is more dangerous to love, than a comfortable assurance of exclusive possession.—I have

* See note 97.

been blamed for allowing such an inexperienced child to go forth into your distant country, where custom is so unfavorable to women; but I know what love is;—I know that a girl who loves, knows no home but the heart of her husband;—the woman whose heart has been touched by Eros no misfortune but that of separation from him whom she has chosen. And besides, I would ask you, Kallias and Theopompus, is the position of your own wives so superior to that of the Persian women? Are not the women of Ionia and Attica forced to pass their lives in their own apartments, thankful if they are allowed to cross the street accompanied by suspicious and distrustful slaves? As to the custom which prevails in Persia of taking many wives, I have no fear either for Bartja or Sappho. He will be more faithful to his wife than are many Greeks, for he will find in her what you are obliged to seek, on the one hand in marriage, on the other in the houses of the cultivated Hetaere:*—in the former, housewives and mothers, in the latter, animated and enlivening intellectual society. Take her, my son. I give her to you as an old warrior gives his sword, his best possession, to his stalwart son:—he gives it gladly and with confidence. Whithersoever she may go she will always remain a Greek, and it comforts me to think that in her new home she will bring honor to the Greek name and friends to our nation, Child, I thank thee for those tears. I can command my own, but fate has made me pay an immeasurable price for the power of doing so. The gods have heard your oath, my noble Bartja. Never forget it, but take her as your own,—your friend,—your wife. Take her away as soon as

* See vol. 1. note 10.

your friends return; it is not the will of the gods that the Hymenæus should be sung at Sappho's nuptial rites."[123]

As she said these words she laid Sappho's hand in Bartja's, embraced her with passionate tenderness, and breathed a light kiss on the forehead of the young Persian. Then turning to her Greek friends, who stood by, much affected:

"That was a quiet nuptial ceremony," she said; "no songs, no torch-light! May their union be so much the happier. Melitta, bring the bride's marriage-ornaments, the bracelets and necklaces which lie in the bronze casket on my dressing-table, that our darling may give her hand to her lord attired as beseems a future princess."[124]

"Yes, and do not linger on the way," cried Kallias, whose old cheerfulness had now returned. "Neither can we allow the niece of the greatest of Hymen's poets* to be married without the sound of song and music. The young husband's house is, to be sure, too far off for our purpose, so we will suppose that the

123. The Hymenæus was the wedding-song, so called because of its *refrain* "Hymen O! Hymenae' O!" The god of marriage, Hymen, took his origin and name from the hymn, was afterwards decked out richly with myths, and finally, according to Catullus, received a seat on Mount Helikon with the Muses. Köchly (Sappho, p. 195.) thinks that these Hymenæi may be called a kind of lyric drama, as they were composed of different portions like the acts of a play, in which the characteristic parts of the marriage-ceremony were described in song and accompanied by appropriate action.

124. A Greek bride was beautifully adorned for her marriage, and her bridesmaids received holiday garments. Homer, *Odyss.* VI. 27. Besides which, after the bath, which both bride and bridegroom were obliged to take, she was anointed with sweet-smelling essences. Thucyd. II. 15, Xenoph. *Symp.* II. 3. Böttiger, *Aldobr. Hochzeit.* p. 41.

* The Lesbian Sappho.

andronitis is his dwelling. We will conduct the maiden thither by the centre door, and there we will enjoy a merry wedding-feast by the family hearth. Here, slave-girls, come and form yourselves into two choruses. Half of your number take the part of the youths; the other half that of the maidens, and sing us Sappho's Hymenæus. I will be the torch-bearer;"[125] that dignity is mine by right. You must know, Bartja, that my family has an hereditary right to carry the torches at the Eleusinian mysteries and we are therefore called Daduchi or torch-bearers.* Ho, slave! see that the door of the *andronitis* is hung with flowers, and tell your comrades to meet us with a shower of sweetmeats as we enter.[126] That's right, Melitta; why, how did you manage to get those lovely violet and myrtle marriage-crowns made so quickly?** The rain is streaming through the opening above. You see, Hymen has persuaded Zeus to help him; so that not a single marriage-rite shall be omitted. You could not take the bath, which ancient custom prescribes for the bride and bridegroom on the morning of their wedding-day, so you have only to stand here a moment and take the rain of Zeus as an equivalent for the waters of the sacred spring. Now, girls, begin your song. Let the maidens bewail the rosy days of childhood, and the youths praise the lot of those who marry young."

Five well-practised treble voices now began to sing the chorus of virgins in a sad and plaintive tone.

125. The mother of the bride lighted the torch. *Iphig. a. Aulis.* 722. The torch-bearer was probably intended to represent Hymen, *Aldobr. Hochzeit*, p. 142. Becker, *Charikles*, III. p. 306.

126. A custom also in vogue at Rome. *Schol.* Aristoph. Plutarch 768. Becker, *Charikles*, III. p. 306.

* See vol. I. note 69. ** See vol. I. note 213.

"When in the garden's feneed and eultured ground,
Where browse no flocks, where ploughshares never wound,
By sunbeams strengthen'd, nourish'd by the shower,
And sooth'd by zephyr, blooms the lovely flower;
Maids long to place it in their modest zone,
And youths enraptur'd wish it for their own.
But from the stem once plucked, in dust it lies,
Nor youth nor maid will then desire or prize.
The virgin thus her blushing beauty rears,
Loved by her kindred, and her young eompeers;
But if her simple charm, her maiden grace,
Is sullied by one spoiler's rude embraee,
Adoring youths no more her steps attend,
Nor loving maidens greet the maiden friend,
O Hymen, hear! O saered Hymen haste;
Come, god and guardian of the fond and ehaste!"

And the second chorus returned answer in deeper voices and cheerful tones:

"As in the naked field the vine's weak shoot
Nor lifts its languid stem, nor glows with fruit;
But, by itself weighed down, it lonely strays
And on its root its highest tendril lays.
The herdsmen then, the passing hinds, neglect
The lonely vine, nor eherish nor proteet.
If by some happy chance its feeble boughs
Twined round the trunk shall make the elm a spouse;
No herdsmen then, nor passing hinds, negleet
The wedded vine, but eherish and proteet.
So is the fair beloved who binds her fate
In wedlock ehaste to some accordant mate
She gives the joys that warm her husband's breast,
And doting parents by her bliss are blest.
O Hymen, hear! O saered Hymen, haste;
Come, god and guardian of the fond and ehaste!" [127]

Then the two choruses joined in repeating the call

127. Only the first two verses of this song have come down to us as Sappho wrote them; for the latter part we are obliged to make use of the imitation, by Catullus, which, however, judging by the original verses which we do possess, may almost be called a translation. The English version is by Lamb.

on Hymen again and again, in tones of mingled desire and exultation.

Suddenly the song was hushed, for a flash of lightning had shone down through the aperture beneath which Kallias had stationed the bride and bridegroom, followed by a loud peal of thunder. "See!" cried the Daduchus, raising his hand to heaven, "Zeus himself has taken the nuptial-torch, and sings the Hymenæus for his favorites."

At dawn the next morning, Sappho and Bartja left the house and went into the garden. After the violent storm which had raged all night, the garden was looking as fresh and cheerful in the morning light as the faces of the newly-married pair.

Bartja's anxiety for his friends, whom he had almost forgotten in the excitement of his marriage, had roused them so early.

The garden had been laid out on an artificial hill, which overlooked the inundated plain. Blue and white lotus-blossoms floated on the smooth surface of the water, and vast numbers of water-birds hovered along the shores or over the flood. Flocks of white herons appeared on the banks, their plumage gleaming like glaciers on distant mountain peaks; a solitary eagle circled upward on its broad pinions through the pure morning air, turtle-doves nestled in the tops of the palm-trees; pelicans and ducks fluttered screaming away, whenever a gay sail appeared. The air had been cooled by the storm, a fresh north-wind was blowing, and, notwithstanding the early hour, there were a number of boats sailing over the deluged fields before the breeze. The songs of the rowers, the plashing strokes of their oars and the cries of the birds, all contributed

to enliven the watery landscape of the Nile valley, which, though varied in color, was somewhat monotonous.

Bartja and Sappho stood leaning on each other by the low wall which ran round Rhodopis' garden, exchanging tender words and watching the scene below, till at last Bartja's quick eye caught sight of a boat making straight for the house and coming on fast by the help of the breeze and powerful rowers.

A few minutes later the boat put in to shore and Zopyrus with his deliverers stood before them.

Darius's plan had succeeded perfectly, thanks to the storm, which, by its violence and the unusual time of its appearance, had scared the Egyptians; but still there was no time to be lost, as it might reasonably be supposed that the men of Sais would pursue their fugitive with all the means at their command.

Sappho, therefore, had to take a short farewell of her grandmother,—all the more tender, however, for its shortness,—and then, led by Bartja and followed by old Melitta, who was to accompany her to Persia, she went on board Syloson's boat. After an hour's sail they reached a beautifully-built and fast-sailing vessel, the Hygieia, which belonged to Kallias.

He was waiting for them on board his trireme. The leave-taking between himself and his young friends was especially affectionate. Bartja hung a heavy and costly gold chain round the neck of the old man in token of his gratitude, while Syloson, in remembrance of the dangers they had shared together, threw his purple cloak over Darius' shoulders. It was a master-specimen of Tyrian dye, and had taken the latter's fancy. Darius accepted the gift with pleasure, and

said, as he took leave: "You must never forget that I am indebted to you, my Greek friend, and as soon as possible give me an opportunity of doing you service in return."

"You ought to come to me first, though," exclaimed Zopyrus, embracing his deliverer. "I am perfectly ready to share my last gold piece with you; or what is more, if it would do you a service, to sit a whole week in that infernal hole from which you saved me.—Ah! they're weighing anchor. Farewell, you brave Greek! Remember me to the flower-sisters, especially to the pretty, little Stephanion, and tell her her long-legged lover won't be able to plague her again for some time to come at least. And then, one more thing;—take this purse of gold for the wife and children of that impertinent fellow, whom I struck too hard in the heat of the fray."

The anchors fell rattling on to the deck, the wind filled the sails, the Trieraules* took his flute and set the measure of the monotonous Keleusma or rowing-song, which echoed again from the hold of the vessel.** The beak of the ship bearing the statue of Hygieia,*** carved in wood, began to move. Bartja and Sappho stood at the helm and gazed towards Naukratis, until the shores of the Nile vanished and the green waves of the Hellenic sea splashed their foam over the deck of the trireme.

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* Flute-player to a trireme. ** See vol. I. note 214.
*** The goddess of health.

CHAPTER XII.

Our young bride and bridegroom had not travelled farther than Ephesus, when the news reached them that Amasis was dead. From Ephesus they went to Babylon, and thence to Pasargadæ, which Kassandane, Atossa and Crœsus had made their temporary residence. Kassandane was to accompany the army to Egypt, and wished, now that Nebenchari had restored her sight, to see the monument which had lately been built to her great husband's memory after Crœsus' design, before leaving for so long a journey. She rejoiced in finding it worthy of the great Cyrus, and spent hours every day in the beautiful gardens which had been laid out round the mausoleum.

It consisted of a gigantic sarcophagus made of solid marble blocks, and resting like a house on a substructure composed of six high marble steps. The interior was fitted up like a room, and contained, beside the golden coffin in which were preserved such few remains of Cyrus as had been spared by the dogs, vultures, and elements, a silver bed and a table of the same metal, on which were golden drinking-cups and numerous garments ornamented with the rarest and most costly jewels.

The building was forty feet high. The shady paradises* and colonnades by which it was surrounded had been planned by Crœsus, and in the midst of the

* Persian pleasure-gardens.

sacred grove was a dwelling-house for the Magi appointed to watch over the tomb.

The palace of Cyrus could be seen in the distance —a palace in which he had appointed that the future kings of Persia should pass at least some months of every year. It was a splendid building in the style of a fortress, and so inaccessibly placed that it had been fixed on as the royal treasure-house.[128]

Here, in the fresh mountain air of a place dedicated to the memory of the husband she had loved so much, Kassandane felt well and at peace; she was glad too to see that Atossa was recovering the old cheerfulness, which she had so sadly lost since the death of Nitetis and the departure of Darius. Sappho soon became the friend of her new mother and sister, and all three felt very loath to leave the lovely Pasargadæ.

Darius and Zopyrus had remained with the army which was assembling in the plains of the Euphrates, and Bartja too had to return thither before the march began.

Cambyses went out to meet his family on their return; he was much impressed with Sappho's great beauty, but she confessed to her husband that his brother only inspired her with fear.

The king had altered very much in the last few months. His formerly pale and almost noble features

128. Strabo 730. according to Aristobulus, Arrian, *Anab.* VI. Curtius X. 1. Pliny. VI. 29. Kugler, *Geschichte der Baukunst* I. p. 99. Schnaase, *Kunstgeschichte* I. 213. Rich. Narrative of a Journey to the Site of Babylon. Ritter, *Erdkunde* VIII. p. 492. Niebuhr, *Reisen* etc. This building, without question, suggests a connection with the rules of architecture held by the Greeks. Herder and Anquetil are also of opinion, that in the matter of architecture, the Persians borrowed more from the Greeks than from the Egyptians.

were reddened and disfigured by the quantities of wine he was in the habit of drinking. In his dark eyes there was the old fire still, but dimmed and polluted. His hair and beard, formerly so luxuriant, and black as the raven's wing, hung down grey and disordered over his face and chin, and the proud smile which used so to improve his features had given way to an expression of contemptuous annoyance and harsh severity.

Sometimes he laughed,—loudly, immoderately and coarsely; but this was only when intoxicated, a condition which had long ceased to be unusual with him.

He continued to retain an aversion to his wives; so much so that the royal harem was to be left behind in Susa, though all his court took their favorite wives and concubines with them on the campaign. Still no one could complain that the king was ever guilty of injustice; indeed he insisted more eagerly now than before on the rigid execution of the law; and wherever he detected an abuse his punishments were cruel and inexorable. Hearing that a judge, named Sisamnes, had been bribed to pronounce an unjust sentence, he condemned the wretched man to be flayed, ordered the seat of justice to be covered with his skin, appointed the son to the father's vacant place and compelled him to occupy this fearful seat.[129] Cambyses was untiring as commander of the forces, and superintended the drilling of the troops assembled near Babylon with the greatest rigor and circumspection.

The hosts were to march after the festival of the New Year,* which Cambyses celebrated this time with immense expense and profusion. The ceremony over,

129. Herodot. V. 25.

* In our month of March.

he betook himself to the army. Bartja was there. He came up to his brother, beaming with joy, kissed the hem of his robe, and told him in a tone of triumph that he hoped to become a father. The king trembled as he heard the words, vouchsafed his brother no answer, drank himself into unconsciousness that evening, and the next morning called the soothsayers, Magi and Chaldæans together, in order to submit a question to them. "Shall I be committing a sin against the gods, if I take my sister to wife and thus verify the promise of the dream, which ye formerly interpreted to mean that Atossa should bear a future king to this realm?"

The Magi consulted a short time together. Then Oropastes cast himself at the king's feet and said, "We do not believe, O King, that this marriage would be a sin against the gods; inasmuch as, first: it is a custom among the Persians to marry with their own kin;[130]— and secondly, though it be not written in the law that the pure man may marry his sister, it is written that the king may do what seemeth good in his own eyes.[131] That which pleaseth thee is therefore always lawful."

Cambyses sent the Magi away with rich gifts, gave Oropastès full powers as regent of the kingdom in his absence, and soon after told his horrified mother that, as soon as the conquest of Egypt and the punishment of the son of Amasis should have been achieved, he intended to marry his sister Atossa.

At length the immense host, numbering more than

130. Anquetil tells us that the modern Parsees still consider a marriage between very near relations as especially advisable. See note 154. to this volume.

131. According to Herod. III. 31.

800,000 fighting men, departed in separate divisions, and reached the Syrian desert in two months. Here they were met by the Arabian tribes whom Phanes had propitiated—the Amalekites and Geshurites—bringing camels and horses laden with water for the host.

At Accho, in the land of the Canaanites, the fleets of the Syrians, Phœnicians and Ionians belonging to Persia, and the auxiliary ships from Cyprus and Samos, won by the efforts of Phanes, were assembled. The case of the Samian fleet was a remarkable one. Polykrates saw in Cambyses' proposal a favorable opportunity of getting rid of all the citizens who were discontented with his government, manned forty triremes with eight thousand malcontent Samians, and sent them to the Persians with the request that not one might be allowed to return home.[132]

As soon as Phanes heard this he warned the doomed men, who at once, instead of sailing to join the Persian forces, returned to Samos and attempted to overthrow Polykrates. They were defeated, however, on land, and escaped to Sparta to ask help against the tyrant.

A full month before the time of the inundation, the Persian and Egyptian armies were standing face to face near Pelusium on the north-east coast of the Delta.

Phanes' arrangements had proved excellent. The Arabian tribes had kept faith so well that the journey through the desert, which would usually have cost thousands of lives, had been attended with very little loss, and the time of year had been so well chosen that the Persian troops reached Egypt by dry roads and without inconvenience.

The king met his Greek friend with every mark of

132. Herod. III. 44.

distinction, and returned a friendly nod when Phanes said: "I hear that you have been less cheerful than usual since the death of your beautiful bride. A woman's grief passes in stormy and violent complaint, but the sterner character of a man cannot so soon be comforted. I know what you feel, for I have lost my dearest too. Let us both praise the gods for granting us the best remedy for our grief—war and revenge."

Phanes accompanied the king to an inspection of the troops and to the evening revel. It was marvellous to see the influence he exercised over this fierce spirit, and how calm—nay even cheerful—Cambyses became, when the Athenian was near.

The Egyptian army was by no means contemptible, even when compared with the immense Persian hosts. Its position was covered on the right by the walls of Pelusium, a frontier fortress designed by the Egyptian kings as a defence against incursions from the east. The Persians were assured by deserters that the Egyptian army numbered altogether nearly six hundred thousand men. Beside a great number of chariots of war, thirty thousand Karian and Ionian mercenaries, and the corps of the Mazai,* two hundred and fifty thousand Kalasirians, one hundred and sixty thousand Hermotybians, twenty thousand horsemen,[133] and auxil-

133. Herodotus informs us (II. 64.) that the entire Egyptian army consisted of two divisions: Hermotybians and Kalasirians. A great many conjectures have been made as to the signification of these two words, some even by Herodotus himself. See S. Birch, *Lettre à M. Letronne sur l'expression hieroglyphique du mot égyptien calasiris. Revue Archéol.* 1847. p. 149. In Egyptian the Kalasirians are called Klaschr, and are bowmen. The Hermotybians probably took their name from the apron which they wore; Hemitybion (ἡμιτύβιον), Aristotle, Plut. 729. This was Egyptian, according to Pollux. VII. 71.—We find

* A kind of police force partly composed of foreigners, who had to guard prisoners of war, and perform other similar duties.

iary troops, amounting to more than fifty thousand, were assembled under Psamtik's banner; amongst these last the Libyan Maschawascha* were remarkable for their military deeds, and the Ethiopians for their numerical superiority.

The infantry were divided into regiments and companies, under different standards,[134] and variously equipped. The heavy-armed soldiers carried large shields, lances, and daggers; the swordsmen[135] and those who fought with battle-axes had smaller shields and light clubs; beside these, there were slingers, but the main body of the army was composed of archers,

chariot-soldiers on almost all the ancient monuments, sometimes wonderfully true to nature. See Rosellini, *Mon. Stor.* II. Pl. 103. I. Pl. 78. Lepsius, *Denkmäler* especially in Abth. III.—The number of the Egyptian chariot-soldiers was known and praised even by Homer. *Il.* IX. 383. and though only representations of five warriors on horseback have been discovered on the Egyptian monuments, (the finest on a relief in the Ethnographical Museum at Bologna, which is far too little known), their inscriptions and numerous statements made by other nations prove that they made use of horse-soldiers also. Diodorus reports that King Rameses led 24,000 horsemen to war and Sesonchis (Sheshenk or Shishak) came up against Jerusalem with threescore thousand. Chron. II. 12. 3. Isaiah 36. 9. According to Herodotus King Amasis was on horseback, when the messenger from Hophra came to him.

134. A number of drawings of such standards or military signs are to be found in Wilkinson I. 294. and Rosellini, *Mon. Civ.* 121. Each Nomos had its own coat of arms. The lists of districts in the temples, especially those belonging to the reigns of the Ptolemies, whose meaning was first discovered by Mr. Harris, English Consul at Alexandria, are particularly instructive.

135. In these and the descriptions immediately following, we have drawn our information, either from the drawings made from Egyptian monuments in Champollion, Wilkinson, Rosellini and Lepsius, or from the monuments themselves. There is a dagger in the Berlin Museum, the blade of which is of bronze, the hilt of ivory and the sheath of leather. Large swords are only to be seen in the hands of the foreign auxiliaries, but the native Egyptians are armed with small ones, like daggers. The largest one of which we have any knowledge is in the possession of Herr E. Brugsch at Cairo. It is more than two feet long.

* Probably the Maxyer of North Africa, spoken of by Herodotus.

whose bows unbent were nearly the height of a man. The only clothing of the horse-soldiers was the apron, and their weapon a light club in the form of a mace or battle-axe. Those warriors, on the contrary, who fought in chariots belonged to the highest rank of the military caste, spent large sums on the decoration of their two-wheeled chariots[136] and the harness of their magnificent horses,* and went to battle in their most costly ornaments. They were armed with bows and lances, and a charioteer stood beside each, so that their undivided attention could be bestowed upon the battle.

The Persian foot was not much more numerous than the Egyptian, but they had six times the number of horse-soldiers.

As soon as the armies stood face to face, Cambyses caused the great Pelusian plain to be cleared of trees and brushwood, and had the sand-hills removed which were to be found here and there, in order to give his cavalry and scythe-chariots a fair field of action.[137] Phanes' knowledge of the country was of great use. He had drawn up a plan of action with great military skill, and succeeded in gaining not only Cambyses' approval, but that of the old general Megabyzus and the best tacticians among the Achæmenidæ. His local knowledge was especially valuable on account of the marshes which intersected the Pelusian plain, and might, unless carefully avoided, have proved fatal to the Persian enterprise. At the close of the council of war Phanes begged to be heard once more: "Now, at length," he said, "I am at

136. Rosellini gives drawings of especially-beautiful war-chariots. *Mon. Stor.* I. Pl. 78. *Mon Civ.* Pl. 122. Wilkinson I. p. 346.

137. See the battle of Gaugamela. Curtius IV. Arrian III. 11.

* See vol. 1 note 30.

liberty to satisfy your curiosity in reference to the closed waggons full of animals, which I have had transported hither. They contain five thousand cats! Yes, you may laugh, but I tell you these creatures will be more serviceable to us than a hundred thousand of our best soldiers. Many of you are aware that the Egyptians have a superstition which leads them rather to die than kill a cat, I, myself, nearly paid for such a murder once with my life. Remembering this, I have been making a diligent search for cats during my late journey; in Cyprus, where there are splendid specimens, in Samos and in Crete. All I could get I ordered to be caught, and now propose that they be distributed among those troops who will be opposed to the native Egyptian soldiers. Every man must be told to fasten one firmly to his shield and hold it out as he advances towards the enemy. I will wager that there's not one real Egyptian, who would not rather fly from the battle-field than take aim at one of these sacred animals."*

This speech was met by a loud burst of laughter; on being discussed, however, it was approved of, and ordered to be carried out at once. The ingenious Greek was honored by receiving the king's hand to kiss, his expenses were reimbursed by a magnificent present, and he was urged to take a daughter of some noble Persian family in marriage.[138] The king concluded by inviting him to supper, but this the Athenian declined, on the plea that he must review the Ionian troops, with whom he was as yet but little acquainted, and withdrew.

138. Themistocles too, on coming to the Persian court, received a high-born Persian wife in marriage. Diod. XI. 57.

* See vol. I. note 51.

At the door of his tent he found his slaves disputing with a ragged, dirty and unshaven old man, who insisted on speaking with their master. Fancying he must be a beggar, Phanes threw him a piece of gold; the old man did not even stoop to pick it up, but, holding the Athenian fast by his cloak, cried, "I am Aristomachus the Spartan!"

Cruelly as he was altered, Phanes recognized his old friend at once, ordered his feet to be washed and his head anointed, gave him wine and meat to revive his strength, took his rags off and laid a new *chiton* over his emaciated, but still sinewy, frame.

Aristomachus received all in silence; and when the food and wine had given him strength to speak, began the following answer to Phanes' eager questions.

On the murder of Phanes' son by Psamtik, he had declared his intention of leaving Egypt and inducing the troops under his command to do the same, unless his friend's little daughter were at once set free, and a satisfactory explanation given for the sudden disappearance of the boy. Psamtik promised to consider the matter. Two days later, as Aristomachus was going up the Nile by night to Memphis, he was seized by Egyptian soldiers, bound and thrown into the dark hold of a boat, which, after a voyage of many days and nights, cast anchor on a totally unknown shore. The prisoners were taken out of their dungeon and led across a desert under the burning sun, and past rocks of strange forms, until they reached a range of mountains with a colony of huts at its base. These huts were inhabited by human beings, who, with chains on their feet, were driven every morning into the shaft of a mine and there compelled to hew grains of gold out of the

stony rock.[139] Many of these miserable men had passed forty years in this place, but most died soon, overcome by the hard work and the fearful extremes of heat and cold to which they were exposed on entering and leaving the mine.

"My companions," continued Aristomachus, "were either condemned murderers to whom mercy had been granted, or men guilty of high treason whose tongues had been cut out, and others such as myself whom the king had reason to fear. Three months I worked among this set, submitting to the strokes of the overseer, fainting under the fearful heat, and stiffening under the cold dews of night. I felt as if picked out for death and only kept alive by the hope of vengeance. It happened, however, by the mercy of the gods, that at the feast of Pacht,* our guards, as is the custom of the

139. Diodorus (III. 12.) describes the compulsory work in the gold mines with great minuteness. The convicts were either prisoners taken in war, or people whom despotism in its blind fury found it expedient to put out of the way. The mines lay in the plain of Koptos, not far from the Red Sea. Traces of them have been discovered in modern times. Interesting inscriptions of the time of Rameses the Great, (14 centuries B. C.) referring to the gold-mines, have been found, one at Radesieh, the other at Kuban, and have been published and deciphered in Europe. (Lepsius, *Denkm.* Abth. III. 139-141.) The Stela of Kuban, first edited by Prisse d'Avennes, *Mon. Égypte.* Pl. 21. and treated by Birch, *Archaeologia.* Part. 34. Also, by Chabas in his publication: *Les inscriptions des mines d'or.* Paris 1862. accompanied by an exact photograph. The subject of both inscriptions is the improvement of the road to the gold-mines in the desert between Kuban and the Red Sea, by the introduction of drinking-water. There is a very interesting papyrus in the Turin Museum connected with this subject, which has a map giving a most remarkable outline of the mineral region spoken of in the two Stelæ. Chabas has a first-rate colored fac-simile of this. (It was published in Lepsius' *Auswahl von Urkunden des Aegyptischen Alterthums*, 1842. Taf. 22. Rightly estimated by Birch and in Chabas' publication.) The mountains containing gold are colored red, and the words "*tu en nub*" (gold-mountain) written over them in the hieratic character. See Ebers, *Aegypten* p. 269. and following. Also Ebers, *Durch Gosen zum Sinai*, p. 144. and following.

* See vol. I, notes 53 and 288.

Egyptians, drank so freely as to fall into a deep sleep, during which I and a young Jew who had been deprived of his right hand for having used false weights in trade, managed to escape unperceived. Zeus Lacedæmonius and the great God whom this young man worshipped helped us in our need, and, though we often heard the voices of our pursuers, they never succeeded in capturing us. I had taken a bow from one of our guards; with this we obtained food, and when no game was to be found we lived on roots, fruits and birds' eggs. The sun and stars showed us our road. We knew that the gold-mines were not far from the Red Sea and lay to the south of Memphis. It was not long before we reached the coast; and then, pressing onwards in a northerly direction, we fell in with some friendly mariners, who took care of us until we were taken up by an Arabian boat. The young Jew understood the language spoken by the crew, and in their care we came to Eziongeber in the land of Edom. There we heard that Cambyses was coming with an immense army against Egypt, and travelled as far as Harma under the protection of an Amalekite caravan bringing water to the Persian army. From thence I went on to Pelusium in the company of some stragglers from the Asiatic army, who now and then allowed me a seat on their horses, and here I heard that you had accepted a high command in Cambyses' army. I have kept my vow, I have been true to my nation in Egypt; now it is your turn to help old Aristomachus in gaining the only thing he still cares for—revenge on his persecutors."

"And that you shall have!" cried Phanes, grasping the old man's hand. "You shall have the command

of the heavy-armed Milesian troops, and liberty to commit what carnage you like among the ranks of our enemies. This, however, is only paying half the debt I owe you. Praised be the gods, who have put it in my power to make you happy by one single sentence. Know then, Aristomachus, that, only a few days after your disappearance, a ship arrived in the harbor of Naukratis from Sparta. It was guided by your own noble son and expressly sent by the Ephori* in your honor—to bring the father of two Olympic victors back to his native land."

The old man's limbs trembled visibly at these words, his eyes filled with tears and he murmured a prayer. Then smiting his forehead, he cried in a voice trembling with feeling: "Now it is fulfilled! now it has become a fact! If I doubted the words of thy priestess, O Phœbus Apollo! pardon my sin! What was the promise of the oracle?

"If once the warrior hosts from the snow-topped mountains descending,
Come to the fields of the stream watering richly the plain,
Then shall the lingering boat to the beckoning meadows convey thee,
Which to the wandering foot peace and a home can afford.
When those warriors come, from the snow-topped mountains descending,
Then will the powerful Five grant thee what long they refused."

"The promise of the god is fulfilled. Now I may return home, and I will; but first I raise my hands to Dice, the unchanging goddess of justice, and implore her not to deny me the pleasure of revenge."

"The day of vengeance will dawn to-morrow," said Phanes, joining in the old man's prayer. "To-

* See vol. 1. note 83.

morrow I shall slaughter the victims for the dead—for my son—and will take no rest until Cambyses has pierced the heart of Egypt with the arrows which I have cut for him. Come, my friend, let me take you to the king. One man like you can put a whole troop of Egyptians to flight."

It was night. The Persian soldiers, their position being unfortified, were in order of battle, ready to meet any unexpected attack. The foot-soldiers stood leaning on their shields, the horsemen held their horses saddled and bridled near the camp-fires. Cambyses was riding through the ranks, encouraging his troops by words and looks.[140] Only one part of the army was not yet ranged in order of battle—the centre. It was composed of the Persian body-guard, the apple-bearers,* Immortals, and the king's own relatives, who were always led into battle by the king in person.

The Ionian Greeks too had gone to rest, at Phanes' command. He wanted to keep his men fresh, and allowed them to sleep in their armor, while he kept watch. Aristomachus was welcomed with shouts of joy by the Greeks, and kindly by Cambyses, who assigned him, at the head of one half the Greek troops, a place to the left of the centre attack, while Phanes, with the other half, had his place at the right. The king himself was to take the lead at the head of the ten thousand Immortals, preceded by the blue, red

140. Battle of Gaugamela or Arbela. Curtius IV. 14. 12.

* See vol. 1. p. 272.

and gold imperial banner[141] and the standard of Kawe. Bartja was to lead the regiment of mounted guards numbering a thousand men, and that division of the cavalry which was entirely clothed in mail.

Crœsus commanded a body of troops whose duty it was to guard the camp with its immense treasures, the wives of Cambyses' nobles, and his own mother and sister.

At last Mithras appeared and shed his light upon the earth; the spirits of the night retired to their dens, and the Magi stirred up the sacred fire which had been carried before the army the whole way from Babylon, until it became a gigantic flame. They and the king united in feeding it with costly perfumes, Cambyses offered the sacrifice, and, holding the while a golden bowl high in the air, besought the gods to grant him victory and glory. He then gave the password, "Auramazda, the helper and guide," and placed himself at the head of his guards, who went into the battle with wreaths on their tiaras. The Greeks offered their own sacrifices, and shouted with delight on hearing that the omens were auspicious. Their war-cry was "Hebe."[142]

Meanwhile the Egyptian priests had begun their day also with prayer and sacrifice, and had then placed their army in order of battle.

Psamtik, now King of Egypt, led the centre. He was mounted on a golden chariot; the trappings of his

141. These are the colors of the imperial banner, according to Firdusi. The standard of Kawe consisted of the leather apron of the bold smith, who, according to the Persian myth, caused rebellion against the wicked Zohak and helped Feridun overthrow the cruel destroyer of the empire.

142. Taken from various descriptions by the ancient writers of battles in which Greeks and Persians fought together. "Hebe" was the Greek pass-word at the battle of Mykale. Herod. IX. 98.

horses were of gold and purple, and plumes of ostrich-feathers nodded on their proud heads. He wore the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, and the charioteer who stood at his left hand holding the reins and whip, was descended from one of the noblest Egyptian families.[143]

The Hellenic and Karian mercenaries were to fight at the left of the centre, the horse at the extreme of each wing, and the Egyptian and Ethiopian foot were stationed, six ranks deep, on the right and left of the armed chariots, and Greek mercenaries.

Psamtik drove through the ranks of his army, giving encouraging and friendly words to all the men. He drew up before the Greek division, and addressed them thus: "Heroes of Cyprus and Libya! your deeds in arms are well known to me, and I rejoice in the thought of sharing your glory to-day and crowning you with fresh laurels. Ye have no need to fear, that in the day of victory I shall curtail your liberties. Malicious tongues have whispered that this is all ye have to expect from me; but I tell you, that if we conquer, fresh favors will be shown to you and your descendants; I shall call you the supporters of my throne. Ye are fighting to-day, not for me alone, but for the freedom of your own distant homes. It is

143. The manner in which the kings behaved to their charioteers proves that the latter must have belonged to the aristocracy. See the picture of Rameses and his charioteer at Thebes. Wilkinson I. 338. The poem of Pentaur, the national epic poem of Egypt, several copies of which have been preserved, represents Pharaoh as having been nearly related to his charioteer. We possess, in addition to this, a papyrus containing a description of the trials which a young Egyptian chariot-soldier had to go through. We see him at the military academy, and, when that period of his life is over, he receives his horses out of the royal stable from the hands of the Pharaoh himself. This favor could only have been shown to the chosen few.

easy to perceive that Cambyses, once lord of Egypt, will stretch out his rapacious hand over your beautiful Hellas and its islands. I need only remind you, that they lie between Egypt and your Asiatic brethren who are already groaning under the Persian yoke. Your acclamations prove that ye agree with me already, but I must ask for a still longer hearing. It is my duty to tell you *who* has sold, not only Egypt, but his own country to the King of Persia, in return for immense treasures. The man's name is Phanes! You are angry and inclined to doubt? I swear to you, that this very Phanes has accepted Cambyses' gold and promised not only to be his guide to Egypt, but to open the gates of your own Greek cities to him. He knows the country and the people, and can be bribed to every perfidy. Look at him! there he is, walking by the side of the king. See how he bows before him! I thought I had heard once, that the Greeks only prostrated themselves before their gods. But of course, when a man sells his country, he ceases to be its citizen. Am I not right? Ye scorn to call so base a creature by the name of countryman? Yes? then I will deliver the wretch's daughter into your hands. Do what ye will with the child of such a villain. Crown her with wreaths of roses, fall down before her, if it please you, but do not forget that she belongs to a man who has disgraced the name of Hellene, and has betrayed his countrymen and country!"

As he finished speaking the men raised a wild cry of rage and took possession of the trembling child. A soldier held her up, so that her father—the troops not being more than a bow-shot apart—could see all that happened. At the same moment an Egyptian,

who afterwards earned celebrity through the loudness of his voice,[144] cried: "Look here, Athenian! see how treachery and corruption are rewarded in this country!" A bowl of wine stood near, provided by the king, from which the soldiers had just been drinking themselves into intoxication. A Karian seized it, plunged his sword into the innocent child's breast, and let the blood flow into the bowl; filled a goblet with the awful mixture, and drained it, as if drinking to the health of the wretched father. Phanes stood watching the scene, as if struck into a statue of cold stone. The rest of the soldiers then fell upon the bowl like madmen, and wild beasts could not have lapped up the foul drink with greater eagerness.[145]

In the same moment Psamtik triumphantly shot off his first arrow into the Persian ranks.

The mercenaries flung the child's dead body on to the ground; drunk with her blood, they raised their battle-song, and rushed into the strife far ahead of their Egyptian comrades.

But now the Persian ranks began to move. Phanes, furious with pain and rage, led on his heavy-armed troops, indignant too at the brutal barbarity of their countrymen, and dashed into the ranks of those very soldiers, whose love he had tried to deserve during ten years of faithful leadership.

At noon, fortune seemed to be favoring the Egyptians; but at sunset the Persians had the advantage, and when the full-moon rose, the Egyptians were flying wildly from the battle-field, perishing in the marshes and in the arm of the Nile which flowed

144. Herod. IV. 141.

145. Herodotus tells this fearful tale (III. 11.)

behind their position, or being cut to pieces by the swords of their enemies.

Twenty thousand Persians and fifty thousand Egyptians lay dead on the blood-stained sea-sand. The wounded, drowned, and prisoners could scarcely be numbered.[146] Psamtik had been one of the last to fly. He was well mounted, and, with a few thousand faithful followers, reached the opposite bank of the Nile and made for Memphis, the well-fortified city of the Pyramids.

Of the Greek mercenaries very few survived, so furious had been Phanes' revenge, and so well had he been supported by his Ionians. Ten thousand Karians were taken captive and the murderer of his little child was killed by Phanes' own hand.

Aristomachus too, in spite of his wooden leg, had performed miracles of bravery; but, notwithstanding all their efforts, neither he, nor any of his confederates in revenge, had succeeded in taking Psamtik prisoner.

When the battle was over, the Persians returned in triumph to their tents, to be warmly welcomed by Crœsus and the warriors and priests who had remained behind, and to celebrate their victory by prayers and sacrifices.

The next morning Cambyses assembled his generals and rewarded them with different tokens of distinction, such as costly robes, gold chains, rings, swords, and stars formed of precious stones.[147] Gold and silver coins were distributed among the common soldiers.

146. Herod. III. 12. Ktesias, *Persica* 9. In ancient history the loss of the conquered is always far greater than that of the conquerors. To a certain extent this holds good in the present day, but the proportion is decidedly not so unfavorable for the vanquished. We would remind our readers of the campaign of 1866.

147. Herod. III. 130. VIII. 118. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* VIII. 3.

The principal attack of the Egyptians had been directed against the centre of the Persian army, where Cambyses commanded in person; and with such effect that the guards had already begun to give way. At that moment Bartja, arriving with his troop of horsemen, had put fresh courage into the wavering, had fought like a lion himself, and by his bravery and promptitude decided the day in favor of the Persians.

The troops were exultant in their joy: they shouted his praises, as "the conqueror of Pelusium" and the "best of the Achæmenidæ."

Their cries reached the king's ears and made him very angry. He knew he had been fighting at the risk of life, with real courage and the strength of a giant, and yet the day would have been lost if this boy had not presented him with the victory. The brother who had embittered his days of happy love, was now to rob him of half his military glory. Cambyses felt that he hated Bartja, and his fist clenched involuntarily as he saw the young hero looking so happy in the consciousness of his own well-earned success.

Phanes had been wounded and went to his tent; Aristomachus lay near him, dying.

"The oracle has deceived me, after all," he murmured. "I shall die without seeing my country again."

"The oracle spoke the truth," answered Phanes. "Were not the last words of the Pythia?

'Then shall the lingering boat to the beckoning meadows convey thee,
Which to the wandering foot peace and a home will afford?'

"Can you misunderstand their meaning? They

speak of Charon's lingering boat, which will convey you to your last home, to the one great resting-place for all wanderers—the kingdom of Hades."

"Yes, my friend, you are right there. I am going to Hades."

"And the Five have granted you, before death, what they so long refused,—the return to Lacedæmon. You ought to be thankful to the gods for granting you such sons and such vengeance on your enemies. When my wound is healed, I shall go to Greece and tell your son that his father died a glorious death, and was carried to the grave on his shield, as beseems a hero."

"Yes, do so, and give him my shield as a remembrance of his old father. There is no need to exhort him to virtue."

"When Psamtik is in our power, shall I tell him what share you had in his overthrow?"

"No; he saw me before he took to flight, and at the unexpected vision his bow fell from his hand. This was taken by his friends as a signal for flight, and they turned their horses from the battle."

"The gods ordain, that bad men shall be ruined by their own deeds. Psamtik lost courage, for he must have believed that the very spirits of the lower world were fighting against him."

"We mortals gave him quite enough to do. The Persians fought well. But the battle would have been lost without the guards and our troops."

"Without doubt."

"I thank thee, O Zeus Lacedæmonius."

"You are praying?"

"I am praising the gods for allowing me to die at ease as to my country. These heterogeneous masses

can never be dangerous to Greece. Ho, physician, when am I likely to die?"

The Milesian physician, who had accompanied the Greek troops to Egypt, pointed to the arrow-head sticking fast in his breast, and said with a sad smile, "You have only a few hours more to live. If I were to draw the arrow from your wound, you would die at once."

The Spartan thanked him, said farewell to Phanes, sent a greeting to Rhodopis, and then, before they could prevent him, drew the arrow from his wound with an unflinching hand. A few moments later Aristomachus was dead.

The same day a Persian embassy set out for Memphis on board one of the Lesbian vessels. It was commissioned to demand from Psamtik the surrender of his own person and of the city at discretion. Cambyses followed, having first sent off a division of his army under Megabyzus to invest Sais.

At Heliopolis he was met by deputations from the Greek inhabitants of Naukratis and the Libyans, praying for peace and his protection, and bringing a golden wreath and other rich presents. Cambyses received them graciously and assured them of his friendship; but repulsed the messengers from Cyrene and Barka indignantly, and flung, with his own hand, their tribute of five hundred silver minæ* among his soldiers, disdaining to accept so contemptible an offering.

In Heliopolis he also heard that, at the approach of his embassy, the inhabitants of Memphis had flocked to

*£1,875. Herod. III. 3.

the shore, bored a hole in the bottom of the ship, torn his messengers in pieces without distinction, as wild beasts would tear raw flesh, and dragged them into the fortress.[148] On hearing this he cried angrily: "I swear, by Mithras, that these murdered men shall be paid for; ten lives for one."

Two days later and Cambyses with his army stood before the gates of Memphis. The siege was short, as the garrison was far too small for the city, and the citizens were discouraged by the fearful defeat at Pelusium.

King Psamtik himself came out to Cambyses, accompanied by his principal nobles, in rent garments, and with every token of mourning. Cambyses received him coldly and silently, ordering him and his followers to be guarded and removed. He treated Ladice, the widow of Amasis, who appeared at the same time as her step-son, with consideration, and, at the intercession of Phanes, to whom she had always shown favor, allowed her to return to her native town of Cyrene under safe conduct. She remained there until the fall of her nephew, Arcesilaus III. and the flight of her sister Pheretime, when she betook herself to Anthylla, the town in Egypt which belonged to her, and where she passed a quiet, solitary existence, dying at a great age.[149]

Cambyses not only scorned to revenge the imposture which had been practised on him on a woman, but, as a Persian, had far too much respect for a mother, and

148. Herod. III. 13.

149. According to Athenæus I. 25. Anthylla belonged to the queen for the time being. For Cyrene and Arcesilaus see Herod. IV. 163-165.

especially for the mother of a king, to injure Ladice in any way.

While he was engaged in the siege of Sais, Psamtik passed his imprisonment in the palace of the Pharaohs, treated in every respect as a king, but strictly guarded.

Among those members of the upper class who had incited the people to resistance, Neithotep, the high-priest of Neith, had taken the foremost place. He was therefore sent to Memphis and put in close confinement, with one hundred of his unhappy confederates. The larger number of the Pharaoh's court, on the other hand, did homage voluntarily to Cambyses at Sais, entitled him Ramestu, "child of the sun," and suggested that he should cause himself to be crowned King of Upper and Lower Egypt, with all the necessary formalities, and admitted into the priestly caste according to ancient custom. By the advice of Crœsus and Phanes, Cambyses gave in to these proposals, though much against his own will: he went so far, indeed, as to offer sacrifice in the temple of Neith, and allowed the newly-created high-priest of the goddess to give him a superficial insight into the nature of the mysteries. Some of the courtiers he retained near himself, and promoted different administrative functionaries to high posts; the commander of Amasis' Nile fleet succeeded so well in gaining the king's favor, as to be appointed one of those who ate at the royal table.[150] On leaving Sais, Cam-

150. On a statue in the Gregorian Museum in the Vatican, there is an inscription giving an account of Cambyses' sojourn at Sais, which agrees with the facts related in our text. He was lenient to his conquered subjects, and, probably in order to secure his position as the lawful Pharaoh, yielded to the wishes of the priests, was even initiated into the mysteries and did much for the temple of Neith. His adoption of the name Ramestu is also confirmed by this statue. E. de Rougé, *Mémoire sur la statuette naophore du musée Grégorien, au Vatican. Revue Archéol.* 1851. Brugsch, *Geograph. Inschr.* I. p. 247.

byses placed Megabyzus in command of the city; but scarcely had the king quitted their walls than the smothered rage of the people broke forth; they murdered the Persian sentinels, poisoned the wells, and set the stables of the cavalry on fire. Megabyzus at once applied to the king, representing that such hostile acts, if not repressed by fear, might soon be followed by open rebellion. "The two thousand noble youths from Memphis whom you have destined to death as an indemnification for our murdered ambassadors," said he, "ought to be executed at once; and it would do no harm if the son of Psamtik were added to the number, as he can some day become a rallying centre for the rebels. I hear that the daughters of the dethroned king and of the high-priest Neithotep have to carry water for the baths of the noble Phanes."

The Athenian answered with a smile: "Cambyses has allowed me to employ these aristocratic female attendants, my lord, at my own request."

"But has forbidden you to touch the life of one member of the royal house," added Cambyses. "None but a king has the right to punish kings."

Phanes bowed. The king turned to Megabyzus and ordered him to have the prisoners executed the very next day, as an example. He would decide the fate of the young prince later; but at all events he was to be taken to the place of execution with the rest. "We must show them," he concluded, "that we know how to meet all their hostile manifestations with sufficient rigor."

Crœsus ventured to plead for the innocent boy. "Calm yourself, old friend," said Cambyses with a smile;

"the child is not dead yet, and perhaps will be as well off with us as your own son, who fought so well at Pelusium. I confess I should like to know, whether Psamtik bears his fate as calmly and bravely as you did twenty-five years ago."

"That we can easily discover, by putting him on trial," said Phanes. "Let him be brought into the palace-court to-morrow, and let the captives and the condemned be led past him. Then we shall see whether he is a man or a coward."

"Be it so," answered Cambyses. "I will conceal myself and watch him unobserved. You, Phanes, will accompany me, to tell me the name and rank of each of the captives."

The next morning Phanes accompanied the king on to a balcony which ran round the great court of the palace—the court we have already described as being planted with trees. The listeners were hidden by a grove of flowering shrubs, but they could see every movement that took place, and hear every word that was spoken beneath them. They saw Psamtik, surrounded by a few of his former companions. He was leaning against a palm-tree, his eyes fixed gloomily on the ground, as his daughters entered the court. The daughter of Neithotep was with them, and some more young girls, all dressed as slaves; they were carrying pitchers of water. At sight of the king, they uttered such a loud cry of anguish as to wake him from his reverie. He looked up, recognized the miserable girls, and bowed his head lower than before; but only for a moment. Drawing himself up quickly, he asked his eldest daughter for whom she was carrying water. On hearing that she was forced to do the work of a slave

for Phanes, he turned deadly pale, nodded his head, and cried to the girls, "Go on."

A few minutes later the captives were led into the court, with ropes round their necks, and bridles in their mouths.[151] At the head of the train was the little prince Necho. He stretched his hands out to his father, begging him to punish the bad foreigners who wanted to kill him. At this sight the Egyptians wept in their exceeding great misery; but Psamtik's eyes were dry. He bowed his tearless face nearly to the earth, and waved his child a last farewell.

After a short interval, the captives taken in Sais entered. Among them was Neithotep, the once powerful high-priest, clothed in rags and moving with difficulty by the help of a staff. At the entrance-gate he raised his eyes and caught sight of his former pupil Darius. Reckless of all the spectators around him, he went straight up to the young man, poured out the story of his need, besought his help, and ended by begging an alms. Darius complied at once, and by so doing, induced others of the Achæmenidæ, who were standing by, to hail the old man jokingly and throw him little pieces of money, which he picked up laboriously and thankfully from the ground.

At this sight Psamtik wept aloud, and smote upon his forehead, calling on the name of his friend in a voice full of woe.

Cambyses was so astonished at this, that he came forward to the balustrade of the veranda, and pushing the flowers aside, exclaimed: "Explain thyself, thou

151. This statement of Herodotus (III. 14.) is confirmed by the monuments, on which we often see representations of captives being led along with ropes round their necks. What follows is taken entirely from the same passage in Herodotus.

strange man; the misfortunes of a beggar, not even akin to thee, move thy compassion, but thou canst behold thy son on the way to execution and thy daughters in hopeless misery without shedding a tear, or uttering a lament!"

Psamtik looked up at his conqueror, and answered: "The misfortunes of my own house, O son of Cyrus, are too great for tears; but I may be permitted to weep over the afflictions of a friend, fallen, in his old age, from the height of happiness and influence into the most miserable beggary."

Cambyses' face expresseed his approval, and on looking round he saw that his was not the only eye which was filled with tears. Crœsus, Bartja, and all the Persians—nay, even Phanes himself, who had served as interpreter to the kings—were weeping aloud.

The proud conqueror was not displeased at these signs of sympathy, and turning to the Athenian: "I think, my Greek friend" he said, "we may consider our wrongs as avenged. Rise, Psamtik, and endeavor to imitate yonder noble old man, (pointing to Crœsus) by accustoming yourself to your fate. Your father's fraud has been visited on you and your family. The crown, which I have wrested from you is the crown of which Amasis deprived my wife,—my never-to-be-forgotten Nitetis. For her sake I began this war, and for her sake I grant you now the life of your son—she loved him. From this time forward you can live undisturbed at our court, eat at our table and share the privileges of our nobles. Gyges, fetch the boy hither. He shall be brought up as you were, years ago, among the sons of the Achæmenidæ."

The Lydian was hastening to execute this delight-

ful commission, but Phanes stopped him before he could reach the door, and placing himself proudly between the king and the trembling, thankful Psamtik, said: "You would be going on a useless errand, noble Lydian. In defiance of your command, my Sovereign, but in virtue of the full powers you once gave me, I have ordered the grandson of Amasis to be the executioner's first victim. You have just heard the sound of a horn; that was the sign that the last heir to the Egyptian throne born on the shores of the Nile has been gathered to his fathers. I am aware of the fate I have to expect, Cambyses. I will not plead for a life whose end has been attained. Crœsus, I understand your reproachful looks. You grieve for the murdered children. But life is such a web of wretchedness and disappointment, that I agree with your philosopher Solon in thinking those fortunate to whom, as in former days to Kleobis and Biton,[152] the gods decree an early death. If I have ever been dear to you, Cambyses—if my counsels have been of any use, permit me as a last favor to say a few more words. Psamtik knows the causes that rendered us foes to each other. Ye all, whose esteem is worth so much to me, shall

152. Crœsus, after having shown Solon his treasures, asked him whom he held to be the most fortunate of men, hoping to hear his own name. The sage first named Tellus, a famous citizen of Athens, and then the brothers Kleobis and Biton. These were two handsome youths, who had gained the prize for wrestling, and one day, when the draught-animals had not returned from the field, dragged their mother themselves to the distant temple, in presence of the people. The men of Argos praised the strength of the sons,—the women praised the mother who possessed these sons. She, transported with delight at her sons' deed and the people's praise, went to the statue of the goddess and besought her to give them the best that could fall to the lot of men. When her prayer was over and the sacrifice offered, the youths fell asleep, and never woke again. They were dead. Herod. I. 31. Cicero. Tuscul. I. 47.

know them too. This man's father placed me in his son's stead at the head of the troops which had been sent to Cyprus. Where Psamtik had earned humiliation, I won success and glory. I also became unintentionally acquainted with a secret, which seriously endangered his chances of obtaining the crown; and lastly, I prevented his carrying off a virtuous maiden from the house of her grandmother, an aged woman, beloved and respected by all the Greeks. These are the sins which he has never been able to forgive; these are the grounds which led him to carry on war to the death with me directly I had quitted his father's service. The struggle is decided now. My innocent children have been murdered at thy command, and I have been pursued like a wild beast. That has been thy revenge. But mine!—I have deprived thee of thy throne and reduced thy people to bondage. Thy daughter I have called my slave, thy son's death-warrant was pronounced by my lips, and my eyes have seen the maiden whom thou persecutedst become the happy wife of a brave man. Undone, sinking ever lower and lower, thou hast watched me rise to be the richest and most powerful of my nation. In the lowest depth of thine own misery—and this has been the most delicious morsel of my vengeance—thou wast forced to see me—me, Phanes!—shedding tears that could not be kept back, at the sight of thy misery. The man, who is allowed to draw even one breath of life, after beholding his enemy so low, I hold to be happy as the gods themselves. I have spoken."

He ceased, and pressed his hand on his wound. Cambyses gazed at him in astonishment, stepped forward, and was just going to touch his girdle—an action

which would have been equivalent to the signing of a death-warrant—[153] when his eye caught sight of the chain, which he himself had hung round the Athenian's neck as a reward for the clever way in which he had proved the innocence of Nitetis. The sudden recollection of the woman he loved, and of the countless services rendered him by Phanes, calmed his wrath—his hand dropped. One minute the severe ruler stood gazing lingeringly at his disobedient friend; the next, moved by a sudden impulse, he raised his right hand again, and pointed imperiously to the gate leading from the court.

Phanes bowed in silence, kissed the king's robe, and descended slowly into the court. Psamtik watched him, quivering with excitement, sprang towards the veranda, but before his lips could utter the curse which his heart had prepared, he sank powerless on to the ground.

Cambyses beckoned to his followers to make immediate preparations for a lion-hunt in the Libyan mountains.

CHAPTER XIII.

The waters of the Nile had begun to rise again. Two months had passed away since Phanes' disappearance, and much had happened.

153. The same sign was used by the last Darius to denote that his able Greek general Memnon, who had offended him by his plainness of speech, was doomed to death. As he was being led away, Memnon exclaimed, in allusion to Alexander, who was then fast drawing near: "Thy remorse will soon prove my worth; my avenger is not far off." Droysen, *Alex. d. Grosse*, I. p. 240. Diod. XVII. 30. Curtius III. 2.

The very day on which he left Egypt, Sappho had given birth to a girl, and had so far regained strength since then under the care of her grandmother, as to be able to join in an excursion up the Nile, which Crœsus had suggested should take place on the festival of the goddess Neith. Since the departure of Phanes, Cambyses' behavior had become so intolerable, that Bartja, with the permission of his brother, had taken Sappho to live in the royal palace at Memphis, in order to escape any painful collision. Rhodopis, at whose house Crœsus and his son, Bartja, Darius and Zopyrus were constant guests, had agreed to join the party.

On the morning of the festival-day they started in a gorgeously decorated boat, from a point between thirty and forty miles below Memphis, favored by a good north-wind and urged rapidly forward by a large number of rowers.

A wooden roof or canopy, gilded and brightly painted, sheltered them from the sun. Crœsus sat by Rhodopis; Theopompus the Milesian lay at her feet. Sappho was leaning against Bartja. Syloson, the brother of Polykrates, had made himself a comfortable resting-place next to Darius, who was looking thoughtfully into the water. Gyges and Zopyrus busied themselves in making wreaths for the women, from the flowers handed them by an Egyptian slave.

"It seems hardly possible," said Bartja, "that we can be rowing against the stream. The boat flies like a swallow."

"This fresh north-wind brings us forward," answered Theopompus. "And then the Egyptian boatmen understand their work splendidly."

"And row all the better just because we are sailing

against the stream," added Crœsus. "Resistance always brings out a man's best powers."

"Yes," said Rhodopis, "sometimes we even make difficulties, if the river of life seems too smooth."

"True," answered Darius. "A noble mind can never swim with the stream. In quiet inactivity all men are equal. We must be seen fighting, to be rightly estimated."

"Such noble-minded champions must be very cautious, though," said Rhodopis, "lest they become contentious and quarrelsome. Do you see those melons lying on the black soil yonder, like golden balls? Not one would have come to perfection if the sower had been too lavish with his seed. The fruit would have been choked by too luxuriant tendrils and leaves. Man is born to struggle and to work, but in this, as in everything else, he must know how to be moderate if his efforts are to succeed. The art of true wisdom is to keep within limits."

"Oh, if Cambyses could only hear you!" exclaimed Crœsus. "Instead of being contented with his immense conquests, and now thinking for the welfare of his subjects, he has all sorts of distant plans in his head. He wishes to conquer the entire world, and yet, since Phanes left, scarcely a day has passed in which he has not been conquered himself by the Div of drunkenness."

"Has his mother no influence over him?" asked Rhodopis. "She is a noble woman."

"She could not even move his resolution to marry Atossa, and was forced to be present at the marriage-feast."

"Poor Atossa!" murmured Sappho.

"She does not pass a very happy life as Queen of Persia," answered Crœsus; "and her own naturally impetuous disposition makes it all the more difficult for her to live contentedly with this husband and brother; I am sorry to hear it said that Cambyses neglects her sadly, and treats her like a child. But the marriage does not seem to have astonished the Egyptians, as brothers and sisters often marry here."[154]

"In Persia too," said Darius, putting on an appearance of the most perfect composure, "marriages with very near relations are thought to be the best."*

"But to return to the king," said Crœsus, turning the conversation for Darius' sake. "I can assure you, Rhodopis, that he may really be called a noble man. His violent and hasty deeds are repented of almost as soon as committed, and the resolution to be a just and merciful ruler has never forsaken him. At supper, for instance, lately, before his mind was clouded by the influence of wine, he asked us what the Persians thought of him in comparison with his father."

"And what was the answer?" said Rhodopis.

"Intaphernes got us out of the trap cleverly enough," answered Zopyrus, laughing. "He exclaimed: 'We are of opinion that you deserve the preference, inasmuch as you have not only preserved intact the inheritance bequeathed you by Cyrus, but have extended his dominion beyond the seas by your conquest of Egypt.' This answer did not seem to please the

154. Marriages with a sister or a deceased wife's brother were not uncommon among the Egyptians. This is confirmed by numerous testimonies. Diod. I. 27. *Cod. Justin.* V. *Tit.* V. Leg. VIII. Also by Greek writers. Cor. Nep. I. v. *Cim.* I. The history of the Ptolemies, and especially of Philadelphus, is full of examples of such marriages.

* See note 130.

king, however, and poor Intaphernes was not a little horrified to hear him strike his fist on the table and cry, 'Flatterer, miserable flatterer!' He then turned to Crœsus and asked his opinion. Our wise friend answered at once: 'My opinion is that you have not attained to the greatness of your father; for,' added he in a pacifying tone, 'one thing is wanting to you—a son such as Cyrus bequeathed us in yourself.'" [155]

"First-rate, first-rate," cried Rhodopis clapping her hands and laughing. "An answer that would have done honor to the ready-witted Odysseus himself. And how did the king take your honeyed pill?"

"He was very much pleased, thanked Crœsus, and called him his friend."

"And I," said Crœsus taking up the conversation, "used the favorable opportunity to dissuade him from the campaigns he has been planning against the long-lived Ethiopians, the Ammonians and the Carthaginians. Of the first of these three nations we know scarcely anything but through fabulous tales; by attacking them we should lose much and gain little. The oasis of Ammon is scarcely accessible to a large army, on account of the desert by which it is surrounded; besides which, it seems to me sacrilegious to make war upon a god in the hope of obtaining possession of his treasures, whether we be his worshippers or not. As to the Carthaginians, facts have already justified my predictions. Our fleet is manned principally by Syrians and Phœnicians, and they have, as might be expected, refused to go to war against their brethren. Cambyses laughed at my reasons, and ended by swearing, when he was already somewhat intoxicated, that he could carry out

155. Herod. III. 34.

difficult undertakings and subdue powerful nations, even without the help of Bartja and Phanes."

"What could that allusion to you mean, my son?" asked Rhodopis.

"He won the battle of Pelusiam," cried Zopyrus, before his friend could answer. "He and no one else!"

"Yes," added Crœsus, "and you might have been more prudent, and have remembered that it is a dangerous thing to excite the jealousy of a man like Cambyses. You all of you forget that his heart is sore, and that the slightest vexation pains him. He has lost the woman he really loved; his dearest friend is gone; and now you want to disparage the last thing in this world that he still cares for,—his military glory."

"Don't blame him," said Bartja, grasping the old man's hand. "My brother has never been unjust, and is far from envying me what I must call my good fortune, for that my attack arrived just at the right time can hardly be reckoned as a merit on my part. You know he gave me this splendid sabre, a hundred thorough-bred horses, and a golden hand-mill* as rewards of my bravery."

Crœsus' words had caused Sappho a little anxiety at first; but this vanished on hearing her husband speak so confidently, and by the time Zopyrus had finished his wreath and placed it on Rhodopis' head, all her fears were forgotten.

Gyges had prepared his for the young mother. It was made of snow-white water-lilies, and, when she placed it among her brown curls, she looked so won-

* See note 219.

derfully lovely in the simple ornament, that Bartja could not help kissing her on the forehead, though so many witnesses were present. This little episode gave a merry turn to the conversation; every one did his best to enliven the others, refreshments of all kinds were handed round, and even Darius lost his gravity for a time and joined in the jests that were passing among his friends.

When the sun had set, the slaves set elegantly-carved chairs, footstools, and little tables on the open part of the deck. Our cheerful party now repaired thither and beheld a sight so marvellously beautiful as to be quite beyond their expectations.

The feast of Neith, called in Egyptian "the lamp-burning," was celebrated by a universal illumination, which began at the rising of the moon.[156] The shores of the Nile looked like two long lines of fire. Every temple, house and hut was ornamented with lamps according to the means of its possessors. The porches of the country-houses and the little towers on the larger buildings were all lighted up by brilliant flames, burning in pans of pitch and sending up clouds of smoke, in which the flags and pennons waved gently backwards and forwards. The palm-trees and sycamores were silvered by the moonlight and threw strange fantastic reflections on the red waters of the Nile—red from the fiery glow of the houses on their shores. But strong and glowing as was the light of the illumination, its rays had not power to reach the middle of the giant

156. Herodotus (II. 62.) speaks of this "burning of lamps" (λυχνοκαΐα) in honor of the goddess Neith (Pallas Athene). In Homer, Pallas Athene appears with an oil-lamp in her hand. *Odyss.* XIX. 34. Strabo (396) speaks of an eternal lamp, which was kept burning in honor of Athene Polias in her ancient temple on the Acropolis.

river, where the boat was making its course, and the pleasure-party felt as if they were sailing in dark night between two brilliant days. Now and then a brightly-lighted boat would come swiftly across the river and seem, as it neared the shore, to be cutting its way through a glowing stream of molten iron.

Lotus-blossoms, white as snow, lay on the surface of the river, rising and falling with the waves, and looking like eyes in the water. Not a sound could be heard from either shore. The echoes were carried away by the north-wind, and the measured stroke of the oars and monotonous song of the rowers were the only sounds that broke the stillness of this strange night—a night robbed of its darkness.

For a long time the friends gazed without speaking at the wonderful sight, which seemed to glide past them. Zopyrus was the first to break the silence by saying, as he drew a long breath: "I really envy you, Bartja. If things were as they should be, every one of us would have his dearest wife at his side on such a night as this."

"And who forbade you to bring one of your wives?" answered the happy husband.

"The other five," said the youth with a sigh. "If I had allowed Oroetes' little daughter Parysatis, my youngest favorite, to come out alone with me to-night, this wonderful sight would have been my last; to-morrow there would have been one pair of eyes less in the world."

Bartja took Sappho's hand and held it fast, saying, "I fancy *one* wife will content me as long as I live."

The young mother pressed his hand warmly again, and said, turning to Zopyrus: "I don't quite trust you, my friend. It seems to me that it is not the anger of

your wives you fear, so much as the commission of an offence against the customs of your country. I have been told that my poor Bartja gets terribly scolded in the women's apartments for not setting eunuchs to watch over me, and for letting me share his pleasures."

"He does spoil you terribly," answered Zopyrus, "and our wives are beginning to quote him as an example of kindness and indulgence, whenever we try to hold the reins a little tight. Indeed there will soon be a regular women's mutiny at the king's gate, and the Achæmenidæ who escaped the swords and arrows of the Egyptians, will fall victims to sharp tongues and floods of salt tears."

"Oh! you most impolite Persian!" said Syloson laughing. "We must make you more respectful to these images of Aphrodite."

"You Greeks! that's a good idea," answered the youth. "By Mithras, our wives are quite as well off as yours. It's only the Egyptian women, that are so wonderfully free."

"Yes, you are quite right," said Rhodopis. "The inhabitants of this strange land have for thousands of years granted our weaker sex the same rights, that they demand for themselves. Indeed, in many respects, they have given us the preference. For instance, by the Egyptian law it is the daughters, not the sons, who are commanded to foster and provide for their aged parents, showing how well the fathers of this now humbled people understood women's nature, and how rightly they acknowledged that she far surpasses man in thoughtful solicitude and self-forgetful love. Do not laugh at these worshippers of animals. I confess that I cannot understand them, but I feel true admiration for

a people in the teaching of whose priests, even Pythagoras, that great master in the art of knowledge, assured me lies a wisdom as mighty as the Pyramids."

"And your great master was right," exclaimed Darius. "You know that I obtained Neithotep's freedom, and, for some weeks past, have seen him and Onuphis very constantly, indeed they have been teaching me. And oh, how much I have learnt already from those two old men, of which I had no idea before! How much that is sad I can forget, when I am listening to them! They are acquainted with the entire history of the heavens and the earth. They know the name of every king, and the circumstances of every important event that has occurred during the last four thousand years, the courses of the stars, the works of their own artists and sayings of their sages, during the same immense period of time. All this knowledge is recorded in huge books, which have been preserved in a palace at Thebes,* called the "place of healing for the soul." Their laws are a fountain of pure wisdom, and a comprehensive intellect has been shown in the adaptation of all their state institutions to the needs of the country. I wish we could boast of the same regularity and order at home. The idea that lies at the root of all their knowledge is the use of numbers, the only means by which it is possible to calculate the course of the stars, to ascertain and determine the limits of all that exists, and, by the application of which in the shortening and lengthening of the strings of musical instruments, tones can be regulated.[157] Numbers are

157. Zeller, *Geschichte d. Philosophie der Griechen*, I. 292. We agree with Iamblichus in supposing, that these Pythagorean views were derived from the Egyptian mysteries.

* See note 51.

the only certain things; they can neither be controlled nor perverted. Every nation has its own ideas of right and wrong; every law can be rendered invalid by circumstances; but the results obtained from numbers can never be overthrown. Who can dispute, for instance, that twice two make four? Numbers determine the contents of every existing thing; whatever is, is equal to its contents, numbers therefore are the true being, the essence of all that is."

"In the name of Mithras, Darius, do leave off talking in that style, unless you want to turn my brain," interrupted Zopyrus. "Why, to hear you, one would fancy you'd been spending your life among these old Egyptian speculators and had never had a sword in your hand. What on earth have we to do with numbers?"

"More than you fancy," answered Rhodopis. "This theory of numbers belongs to the mysteries of the Egyptian priests, and Pythagoras learnt it from the very Onuphis who is now teaching you, Darius. If you will come to see me soon, I will show you how wonderfully that great Samian brought the laws of numbers and of the harmonies into agreement.[158]—But look, there are the Pyramids!"

The whole party rose at these words, and stood speechless, gazing at the grand sight which opened before them.

The Pyramids lay on the left bank of the Nile, in the silver moonshine, massive and awful, as if bruising the earth beneath them with their weight; the giant graves of mighty rulers. They seemed examples of man's creative power, and at the same time warnings

158. Aristotle, *Metaphys.* I. 5.

of the vanity and mutability of earthly greatness. For where was Chufu now,—the king who had cemented that mountain of stone with the sweat of his subjects? Where was the long-lived Chafra who had despised the gods, and, defiant in the consciousness of his own strength, was said to have closed the gates of the temples in order to make himself and his name immortal by building a tomb of superhuman dimensions?[159] Their empty sarcophagi are perhaps tokens, that the judges of the dead found them unworthy of rest in the grave, unworthy of the resurrection, whereas the builder of the third and most beautiful pyramid, Menkera, who contented himself with a smaller monument, and reopened the gates of the temples, was allowed to rest in peace in his coffin of blue basalt.[160]

There they lay in the quiet night, these mighty pyramids, shone on by the bright stars, guarded by the watchman of the desert—the gigantic sphinx,—and

159. Herodotus repeats, in good faith, that the builders of the great Pyramids were despisers of the gods. The tombs of their faithful subjects at the foot of these huge structures prove, however, (especially in E. de Rougé's *Recherches sur les monuments qu'on peut attribuer aux VI. premières dynasties, &c.*), that they owe their bad repute to the hatred of the people, who could not forget the era of their hardest bondage, and branded the memories of their oppressors wherever an opportunity could be found. We might use the word "tradition" instead of "the people," for this it is which puts the feeling and tone of mind of the multitude into the form of history.

160. Bunsen, *Aegyptens Stelle in der Weltgeschichte* II. 169 and following, Pl. XVII. and in Vyse, *Pyramids of Ghizeh* II. Unfortunately the sarcophagus went down on the coast of Spain, in the ship which was conveying it to Europe. The Arabian geographer, Idrisi, states that shortly before the date at which he was then writing (1240) the pyramid had been opened, and that a mummy had been found in the sarcophagus with a gold plate by its side covered with unknown characters. Birch's translation of the inscription restored by Lepsius is probably the first. It is given in *Vyse's Pyramids* II. p. 94. The inscription restored by Lepsius and artistic representations of every portion of the city of the dead in Memphis, may be found in Ebers *Aegypten in Bild und Wort* I. p. 33 and following.

overlooking the barren rocks of the Libyan stony mountains. At their feet, in beautifully-ornamented tombs, slept the mummies of their faithful subjects, and opposite the monument of the pious Menkera stood a temple, where prayers were said by the priests for the souls of the many dead buried in the great Memphian city of the dead. In the west, where the sun went down behind the Libyan mountains,—where the fruitful land ended and the desert began—there the people of Memphis had buried their dead; and as our gay party looked towards the west they felt awed into a solemn silence.

But their boat sped on before the north-wind; they left the city of the dead behind them and passed the enormous dikes* built to protect the city of Menes from the violence of the floods; the city of the Pharaohs came in sight, dazzlingly bright with the myriads of flames which had been kindled in honor of the goddess Neith, and when at last the gigantic temple of Ptah** appeared, the most ancient building of the most ancient land, the spell broke, their tongues were loosed, and they burst out into loud exclamations of delight.

It was illuminated by thousands of lamps; a hundred fires burnt on its Pylons, its battlemented walls and roofs. Burning torches flared between the rows of sphinxes which connected the various gates with the main building, and the now empty house of the god Apis[161] was so surrounded by colored fires that it

161. More has been said on the characteristic marks of the sacred bull Apis farther on in the text, and on the festival held at his discovery. Great lamentation was made at his death, and he was buried with incredible pomp. In the reign of Ptolemy Lagi the Apis having died of old age, his keeper not only expended on his funeral all the ready money then in store, but borrowed 50 silver talents from the king for

* See vol. 1. note 141. ** See vol. 1. note 56.

gleamed like a white limestone rock in a tropical sunset. Pennons, flags and garlands waved above the brilliant picture; music and loud songs could be heard from below.

"Glorious," cried Rhodopis in enthusiasm, "glorious! Look how the painted walls and columns gleam in the light, and what marvellous figures the shadows of the obelisks and sphinxes throw on the smooth yellow pavement!"

"And how mysterious the sacred grove looks yonder!" added Crœsus. "I never saw anything so wonderful before."

"I have seen something more wonderful still," said Darius. "You will hardly believe me when I tell you that I have witnessed a celebration of the mysteries of Neith."

"Tell us what you saw, tell us!" was the universal outcry.

"At first Neithotep refused me admission, but when I promised to remain hidden, and besides, to obtain the

the same purpose (£6,750). Some of the priests who presided over the Apis-temple are said to have expended 100 talents (£22,500) on the animal's burial. Diod. I. 84. The Egyptians ascribed the gift of prophecy to Apis, (Plin. VIII. 71.), and seem to have considered him as symbolizing a period of 25 years. This supposition has been confirmed by the results of Mariette's excavations in the Serapeum and in the Apis-tombs, and by the deciphering of inscriptions on the so-called Apis-stelae. Mariette found a stone statue of the bull, covered with beautiful inscriptions, and a number of colossal Apis-sarcophagi. The statue was sent to Paris. A. Mariette, *Le Sérapéum de Memphis*. The dates on these Apis-stelae are of the greatest importance for the chronology of later Egyptian history, especially that of the 26th dynasty, which can be accurately determined by their means. We recommend as interesting Mariette's *La mère d'Apis*. He was said by many of the ancient writers to have been generated by a moonbeam, and dedicated to the moon as the Mnevis-bull of Heliopolis to the sun. Pomp. Mela. I. 9. 7. We cannot here discuss the place he held in the Egyptian religion. Much on this subject is to be found in Reinisch, *Die Aegyptischen Denkmäler in Miramar* p. 178. Also in Mariette's writings.

freedom of his child, he led me up to his observatory, from which there is a very extensive view, and told me that I should see a representation of the fates of Osiris and his wife Isis.[162]

"He had scarcely left, when the sacred grove became so brightly illuminated by colored lights that I was able to see into its innermost depths.

"A lake,* smooth as glass, lay before me, surrounded by beautiful trees and flower-beds. Golden boats were sailing on this lake and in them sat lovely boys and girls dressed in snow-white garments, and singing sweet songs as they passed over the water. There were no rowers to direct these boats, and yet they moved over the ripples of the lake in a graceful order, as if guided by some magic unseen hand. A large ship sailed in the midst of this little fleet. Its deck glittered with precious stones. It seemed to be steered by one beautiful boy only, and, strange to say, the rudder he guided consisted of one white lotus-flower, the delicate leaves of which seemed scarcely to touch the water. A very lovely woman, dressed like a queen, lay on silken cushions in the middle of the vessel; by her side sat a man of larger stature than that of ordinary mortals. He wore a crown of ivy on his flowing curls, a panther-skin hung over his shoulders and he held a crooked staff in the right hand. In the back part of the ship was a roof made of ivy, lotus-blossoms and roses; beneath it stood a milk-white

162. These performances in the sacred grove of Neith seemed to have belonged to the external apparatus of the mysteries. The stage on which they took place was the lake of *Sa-el-Hagar*. It exists to this day, and Herodotus (II. 170.) implies that near it was a tomb of Osiris. He says (171) "These plays represented the fates of the above-mentioned, and were called Mysteries." See note 164.

* See vol. I. note 150.

cow[163] with golden horns, covered with a cloth of purple. The man was Osiris, the woman Isis, the boy at the helm their son Horus, and the cow was the animal sacred to the immortal Isis. The little boats all skimmed over the water, singing glad songs of joy as they passed by the ship, and receiving in return showers of flowers and fruits, thrown down upon the lovely singers by the god and goddess within. Suddenly I heard the roll of thunder. It came crashing on, louder, and louder, and in the midst of this awful sound a man in the skin of a wild boar, with hideous features and bristling red hair, came out of the gloomiest part of the sacred grove, plunged into the lake, followed by seventy creatures like himself, and swam up to the ship of Osiris.[164]

"The little boats fled with the swiftness of the wind, and the trembling boy helmsman dropped his lotus-blossom.

"The dreadful monster then rushed on Osiris, and, with the help of his comrades, killed him, threw the body into a coffin and the coffin into the lake,[165] the waters of which seemed to carry it away as if by magic. Isis meanwhile had escaped to land in one of the small boats, and was now running hither and

163. The ivy was the plant of Osiris, the cow, the animal sacred to Isis. Diod. I. 17. Plut. *Isis and Orisis* 37. Herod. II 41. Isis is almost always represented with the head of a cow, and is again and again called "*ehe*" (the cow). There must certainly be a connection between this word and the name Io.

164. We have taken our description of this spectacle entirely from the Osiris-myth, as we find it in Plutarch, *Isis and Orisis* 13-19. Diod. I. 22. and a thousand times repeated on the monuments. Horus is called "the avenger of his father," &c. We copy the battle with all its phases from an inscription at Edfu, interpreted by Naville.

165. Here we have departed in some measure from Plutarch's version, in which Typhon artfully induces Osiris to lie down in the coffin.

thither on the shores of the lake, with streaming hair, lamenting her dead husband and followed by the virgins who had escaped with her. Their songs and dances, while seeking the body of Osiris, were strangely plaintive and touching, and the girls accompanied the dance by waving black Byssus scarfs in wonderfully graceful curves. Neither were the youths idle; they busied themselves in making a costly coffin for the vanished corpse of the god, accompanying their work with dances and the sound of castanets. When this was finished they joined the maidens in the train of the lamenting Isis and wandered on the shore with them, singing and searching.

"Suddenly a low song rose from some invisible lips. It swelled louder and louder and announced, that the body of the god had been transported by the currents of the Mediterranean to Gebal* in distant Phœnicia. This singing voice thrilled to my very heart; Neithotep's son, who was my companion, called it "the wind of rumor."

"When Isis heard the glad news, she threw off her mourning garments and sang a song of triumphant rejoicing, accompanied by the voices of her beautiful followers. Rumor had not lied; the goddess really found the sarcophagus and the dead body of her husband on the northern shore of the lake.[166] They

166. It is natural, that Isis should find the body of her husband in the north. The connection between Phœnicia and Egypt in this myth, as it has been handed down to us by Plutarch, is very remarkable. We consider the explanation of the close affinity between the Isis-and-Osiris and the Adonis myths to lie in the fact, that Egyptians and Phœnicians lived together on the shores of the Delta where the latter had planted their colonies. Plutarch's story of the finding of Osiris' dead body is very charming. *Isis and Osiris. Ed. Parth.* 15. The

*Better known by its Greek name of Byblos.

brought both to land with dances; Isis threw herself on the beloved corpse, called on the name of Osiris and covered the mummy with kisses, while the youths wove a wonderful tomb of lotus-flowers and ivy.

"When the coffin had been laid under this beautiful vault, Isis left the sad place of mourning and went to look for her son. She found him at the east end of the lake, where for a long time I had seen a beautiful youth practising arms with a number of companions.

"While she was rejoicing over her newly-found child, a fresh peal of thunder told that Typhon had returned. This time the monster rushed upon the beautiful flowering grave, tore the body out of its coffin, hewed it into fourteen pieces[167] and strewed them over the shores of the lake.

"When Isis came back to the grave, she found nothing but faded flowers and an empty coffin; but at fourteen different places on the shore fourteen beautiful colored flames were burning. She and her virgins ran

coffin had been overgrown and enclosed by an Erica, which supported the roof of the king of Byblus. This was wafted to Isis' ears by a marvellous breath of rumor (*πνεύματι δαιμονίῳ φήμης*). She went to Byblus and seated herself by a spring, weeping and in poor raiment. She spoke with no one save with the maidens of the queen, whose hair she braided and breathed into them a wonderful perfume, which she alone possessed. When the queen saw her maidens, she felt a desire towards this marvellous stranger, whose hair and skin breathed ambrosial odors, and sent for her. Isis soon became her friend and was appointed nurse to the queen's little child . . . Isis nourished it, by putting her finger into its mouth instead of the breast . . . she herself took the form of a swallow, and flew round the supporting pillar uttering plaintive cries . . . Finally she reveals herself as the goddess and asks for the pillar, draws it lightly away from under the roof, peels the Erica covering from the coffin of Osiris, and anoints him with bitter tears.

167. In 26 pieces, according to Diodorus, (I. 21.) which Typhon distributes among the same number of his companions. Plut. (*Is. and Os.* 18.) agrees with the monuments in stating the number as fourteen. These are separately specified on the latter.

to these flames, while Horus led the youths to battle against Typhon on the opposite shore.

"My eyes and ears hardly sufficed for all I had to see and hear. On the one shore a fearful and interesting struggle, peals of thunder and the braying of trumpets; on the other the sweet voices of the women, singing the most captivating songs to the most enchanting dances, for Isis had found a portion of her husband's body at every fire and was rejoicing.

"That was something for you, Zopyrus! I know of no words to describe the grace of those girls' movements, or how beautiful it was to see them first mingling in intricate confusion, then suddenly standing in faultless, unbroken lines, falling again into the same lovely tumult and passing once more into order, and all this with the greatest swiftness. Bright rays of light flashed from their whirling ranks all the time, for each dancer had a mirror[168] fastened between her shoulders, which flashed while she was in motion, and reflected the scene when she was still.

"Just as Isis had found the last limb but one[169] of the murdered Osiris, loud songs of triumph and the flourish of trumpets resounded from the opposite shore.

"Horus had conquered Typhon, and was forcing his way into the nether regions to free his father. The gate to this lower world opened on the west side of the

168. Dupuis, *Origine des Cultes*. This mirror-dance is most charmingly described by Th. Moore in his *Epicurean*. Nothing determinate can be said about it.

169. Isis sought the last limb in vain. Typhon (Set) had thrown it into the Nile. The goddess made an artificial limb, and from thence arose a worship, which seems to us to have been imported into Egypt from Phœnicia. Diod. I. 22. Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris* 18.

lake and was guarded by a fierce female hippopotamus.[170]

"And now a lovely music of flutes and harps came nearer and nearer, heavenly perfumes rose into the air, a rosy light spread over the sacred grove, growing brighter every minute, and Osiris came up from the lower world, led by his victorious son. Isis hastened to embrace her risen and delivered husband, gave the beautiful Horus his lotus-flower again instead of the sword, and scattered fruits and flowers over the earth, while Osiris seated himself under a canopy wreathed with ivy, and received the homage of all the spirits of the earth and of the Amenti."*

Darius was silent. Rhodopis began:

"We thank you for your charming account; but this strange spectacle must have a higher meaning, and we should thank you doubly if you would explain that to us."

"Your idea is quite right," answered Darius, "but what I know I dare not tell. I was obliged to promise Neithotep with an oath, not to tell tales out of school."[171]

"Shall I tell you," asked Rhodopis, "what conclu-

170. Lepsius considers the animal that kept guard over the lower world, and was generally represented sitting in front of Osiris, to have been a female hippopotamus. Sometimes, however, it is represented as a female dog, and generally of a mongrel form bearing some resemblance to a hippopotamus. Whatever it be, Cerberus certainly owes his origin to this "voracious beast of the Amenthes."

171. Herodotus, in speaking of the Osiris of the mysteries, says (II. 170.) "This sanctuary is holy to him, whose name I hold it sin to mention here;" and (171.) "Though I know much about the mysteries, I am silent in deep reverence."

* The lower world, in Egyptian *Amenti*, properly speaking, the West or kingdom of death, to which the soul returns at the death of the body, as the sun at his setting. In a hieroglyphic inscription of the time of the Ptolemies the Amenti is called Hades.

sions various hints from Pythagoras and Onuphis have led me to draw, as to the meaning of this drama? Isis seems to me to represent the bountiful earth; Osiris, humidity or the Nile, which makes the earth fruitful; Horus, the young spring; Typhon, the scorching drought. The bounteous earth, robbed of her productive power, seeks this beloved husband with lamentations in the cooler regions of the north, where the Nile discharges his waters. At last Horus, the young springing power of nature, is grown up and conquers Typhon, or the scorching drought. Osiris, as is the case with the fruitful principle of nature, was only apparently dead, rises from the nether regions and once more rules the blessed valley of the Nile, in concert with his wife, the bounteous earth."

"And as the murdered god behaved properly in the lower regions," said Zopyrus, laughing, "he is allowed, at the end of this odd story, to receive homage from the inhabitants of Hamestegan, Duzakh and Gorothman,[172] or whatever they call these abodes for the Egyptian spirit-host."

"They are called Amenti," said Darius, falling into his friend's merry mood; but you must know that the history of this divine pair represents not only the life of nature, but also that of the human soul, which, like the murdered Osiris, lives an eternal life, even when the body is dead."

"Thank you," said the other; "I'll try to remember

172. *Haméstegân*—the abode of those whose good and bad deeds were equal; *Duzakh*—Hell; Gorothman—the Paradise of the Persians. Spiegel, *Avesta* I. p. 23. *Ulmai Islam*. Vullers, *Fragments*. The "contemplation from the seven heavens," seems to have belonged to a later period. *(The Ardai-Viraf nameh, &c. Translated from the Persian by J. A. Pope.)* Spiegel, *Avesta*, Farg. XIX. note to §. 121.

that if I should chance to die in Egypt. But really, cost what it may, I must see this wonderful sight soon."

"Just my own wish," said Rhodopis. "Age is inquisitive."

"You will never be old," interrupted Darius. "Your conversation and your features have remained alike beautiful, and your mind is as clear and bright as your eyes."

"Forgive me for interrupting you," said Rhodopis, as if she had not heard his flattering words, "but the word 'eyes' reminds me of the oculist Nebenchari, and my memory fails me so often, that I must ask you what has become of him, before I forget. I hear nothing now of this skilful operator to whom the noble Kassandane owes her sight."

"He is much to be pitied," replied Darius. "Even before we reached Pelusium he had begun to avoid society, and scorned even to speak with his countryman Onuphis. His gaunt old servant was the only being allowed to wait on or be with him. But after the battle his whole behavior changed. He went to the king with a radiant countenance, and asked permission to accompany him to Sais, and to choose two citizens of that town to be his slaves. Cambyses thought he could not refuse anything to the man, who had been such a benefactor to his mother, and granted him full power to do what he wished. On arriving at Amasis' capital, he went at once to the temple of Neith, caused the high-priest (who had moreover placed himself at the head of the citizens hostile to Persia), to be arrested, and with him a certain oculist named Petammon. He then informed them that, as punishment for

the burning of certain papers, they would be condemned to serve a Persian to whom he should sell them, for the term of their natural lives, and to perform the most menial services of slaves in a foreign country. I was present at this scene, and I assure you I trembled before the Egyptian as he said these words to his enemies. Neithotep, however, listened quietly, and when Nebenchari had finished, answered him thus: 'If thou, foolish son, hast betrayed thy country for the sake of thy burnt manuscripts, the deed has been neither just nor wise. I preserved thy valuable works with the greatest care, laid them up in our temple, and sent a complete copy to the library at Thebes.* Nothing was burnt but the letters from Amasis to thy father, and a worthless old chest. Psamtik and Petammon were present, and it was then and there resolved that a new family tomb in the city of the dead should be built for thee as a compensation for the loss of papers, which, in order to save Egypt, we were unfortunately forced to destroy. On its walls thou canst behold pleasing paintings of the gods to whom thou hast devoted thy life, the most sacred chapters from the book of the dead, and many other beautiful pictures touching thine own life and character.'"[173]

173. Descriptions and drawings of such ancient Egyptian tombs are to be found in all the modern works on the land of the Pharaohs. Among them Ebers, *Aegypten in Bild und Wort*. Where there were mountains, the tombs were hewn in the rock; on the level Delta sepulchres were erected. Both were well supplied with inscriptions. For the uninitiated in such matters, the minute particulars given by Brugsch in his description of the tomb of Ti will be instructive. The following inscription on a tomb-stela in the Egyptian Museum at Boolak (Cairo) is particularly interesting. (Mariette's Catalogue p. 76. N. 51.) "O ye great ones, ye prophets, priests, orators and all ye that shall come after me in the millions of years; if any one shall set my name at the end, and set his own name in its place (on the Stele), God

* See note 51.

"The physician turned very pale—asked first to see his books, and then his new and beautifully-fitted-up tomb. He then gave his slaves their freedom, (notwithstanding which they were still taken to Memphis as prisoners of war), and went home, often passing his hand across his forehead on the way, and with the uncertain step of one intoxicated. On reaching his house he made a will, bequeathing all he possessed to the grandson of his old servant Hib, and, alleging that he was ill, went to bed. The next morning he was found dead. He had poisoned himself with the fearful strychnos-juice."*

"Miserable man" said Crœsus. "The gods had blinded him, and he reaped despair instead of revenge, as a reward for his treachery."

"I pity him," murmured Rhodopis. "But look, the rowers are taking in their oars. We are at the end of our journey; there are your litters and carriages waiting for you. It was a beautiful trip. Farewell, my dear ones; come to Naukratis soon. I shall return at once with Theopompus and Syloson. Give little Parmys a thousand kisses from me, and tell Melitta never to take her out at noon. It is dangerous for the eyes.** Good-night, Crœsus; good-night, friends, farewell my dear son."

will requite him with the destruction of his likeness upon earth; if he erase my name upon this, so will God do also unto him." At the time in which Nebenchari lived, (during the 26th dynasty), it was customary to have chapters from the Ritual of the Dead painted on the inner walls of the tombs. Lepsius, *Aelteste Texte des Todtenbuchs* p. 14. A. 1. One of the largest and most richly-ornamented tombs in the Theban Necropolis belongs to a noble of Psamtik's reign. Many chapters from the Ritual of the Dead are found on the walls of the chamber containing the sarcophagus of Amen em ha of the 18th dynasty at Abd el Qurnah, in the western part of Thebes.

* See note 7. ** See vol. 1. note 290.

The Persians left the vessel with many a nod and farewell word, and Bartja, looking round once more, missed his footing and fell on the landing-pier.

He sprang up in a moment without Zopyrus' help, who came running back, calling out, "Take care, Bartja! It's unlucky to fall in stepping ashore. I did the very same thing, when we left the ship that time at Naukratis."

CHAPTER XIV.

WHILE our friends were enjoying their row on the Nile, Cambyses' envoy, Prexaspes, had returned from a mission to the long-lived Ethiopians.[174] He praised their strength and stature, described the way to their country as almost inaccessible to a large army, and had plenty of marvellous tales to tell. How, for instance, they always chose the strongest and handsomest man in their nation for their king, and obeyed him unconditionally: how many of them reached the age of 120 years, and some even passed it: how they ate nothing but boiled flesh, drank new milk and washed in a spring the waters of which had the scent of violets, gave a remarkable lustre to their skins, and were so light that wood could not swim in them: how their captives wore golden fetters, because other metals were rare and dear in their country; and lastly, how they covered the bodies of the dead with plaster or stucco, over which a coating of some glass-like material was poured, and kept the pillars thus formed one year in

174. Herod. II. 20-25.

their houses, during which time sacrifices were offered to them, and at the year's end they were placed in rows around the town.

The king of this strange people had accepted Cambyses' presents, saying, in a scornful tone, that he knew well his friendship was of no importance to the Persians, and Prexaspes had only been sent to spy out the land. If the prince of Asia were a just man, he would be contented with his own immense empire and not try to subjugate a people who had done him no wrong. "Take your king this bow," he said, "and advise him not to begin the war with us, until the Persians are able to bend such weapons as easily as we do. Cambyses may thank the gods, that the Ethiopians have never taken it into their heads to conquer countries which do not belong to them."

He then unbent his mighty bow of ebony, and gave it to Prexaspes to take to his lord.

Cambyses laughed at the bragging African, invited his nobles to a trial of the bow the next morning, and rewarded Prexaspes for the clever way in which he had overcome the difficulties of his journey and acquitted himself of his mission. He then went to rest, as usual intoxicated, and fell into a disturbed sleep, in which he dreamed that Bartja was seated on the throne of Persia, and that the crown of his head touched the heavens.[175]

This was a dream, which he could interpret without the aid of soothsayer or Chaldean. It roused his anger first, and then made him thoughtful.

He could not sleep, and such questions as the following came into his mind: "Haven't you given

175. Herod. III. 30.

your brother reason to feel revengeful? Do you think he can forget that you imprisoned and condemned him to death, when he was innocent? And if he should raise his hand against you, would not all the Achæmenidæ take his part? Have I ever done, or have I any intention of ever doing anything to win the love of these venal courtiers? Since Nitetis died and that strange Greek fled, has there been a single human being, in whom I have the least confidence or on whose affection I can rely?"

These thoughts and questionings excited him so fearfully, that he sprang from his bed, crying: "Love and I have nothing to do with one another. Other men may be kind and good if they like; I must be stern, or I shall fall into the hands of those who hate me—hate me because I have been just, and have visited heavy sins with heavy chastisements. They whisper flattering words in my ear; they curse me when my back is turned. The gods themselves must be my enemies, or why do they rob me of everything I love, deny me posterity and even that military glory which is my just due? Is Bartja so much better than I, that everything which I am forced to give up should be his in hundred-fold measure? Love, friendship, fame, children,—everything flows to him as the rivers to the sea, while my heart is parched like the desert. But I am king still. I can show him which is the stronger of us two, and I will, though his forehead may touch the heavens. In Persia there can be only one great man. He or I,—I or he. In a few days I'll send him back to Asia and make him satrap of Bactria. There he can nurse his child and listen to his wife's songs, while I am winning glory in Ethiopia,

which it shall not be in his power to lessen. Ho, there, dressers! bring my robes and a good morning-draught of wine. I'll show the Persians that I'm fit to be King of Ethiopia, and can beat them all at bending a bow. Here, give me another cup of wine. I'd bend that bow, if it were a young cedar and its string a cable!" So saying he drained an immense bowl of wine and went into the palace-garden, conscious of his enormous strength and therefore sure of success.

All his nobles were assembled waiting for him there, welcomed him with loud acclamations, and fell on their faces to the ground before their king.

Pillars, connected by scarlet cords, had been quickly set up between the closely-cut hedges and straight avenues.* From these cords, suspended by gold and silver rings, yellow and dark blue hangings[176] fluttered in the breeze. Gilded wooden benches had been placed round in a large circle, and nimble cup-bearers handed wine in costly vessels to the company assembled for the shooting-match.

At a sign from the king the Achæmenidæ rose from the earth.

Cambyses glanced over their ranks, and his face brightened on seeing that Bartja was not there. Prexaspes handed him the Ethiopian bow, and pointed out a target at some distance. Cambyses laughed at the large size of the target, weighted the bow with his right hand, challenged his subjects to try their fortune

176. Book of Esther I. 6. There the hangings are white, green and blue or violet. (English version.) In the text we have given red, yellow and dark blue, because these were the Persian colors. See p. 266 and note 141.

* See vol. 1. note 7.

first, and handed the bow to the aged Hystaspes, as the highest in rank among the Achæmenidæ.

While Hystaspes first, and then all the heads of the six other highest families in Persia, were using their utmost efforts to bend this monster weapon in vain, the king emptied goblet after goblet of wine, his spirits rising as he watched their vain endeavors to solve the Ethiopian's problem. At last Darius, who was famous for his skill in archery, took the bow. Nearly the same result. The wood was inflexible as iron and all his efforts only availed to move it one finger's breadth. The king gave him a friendly nod in reward for his success, and then, looking round on his friends and relations in a manner that betokened the most perfect assurance, he said: "Give me the bow now, Darius. I will show you, that there is only one man in Persia who deserves the name of king;—only one who can venture to take the field against the Ethiopians;—only one who can bend this bow."

He grasped it tightly with his left hand, taking the string, which was as thick as a man's finger and made from the intestines of a lion, in his right, fetched a deep breath, bent his mighty back and pulled and pulled; collected all his strength for greater and greater efforts, strained his sinews till they threatened to break, and the veins in his forehead were swollen to bursting, did not even disdain to use his feet and legs, but all in vain. After a quarter of an hour of almost superhuman exertion, his strength gave way, the ebony, which he had succeeded in bending even farther than Darius, flew back and set all his further endeavors at nought. At last, feeling himself thoroughly exhausted, he dashed the bow on to the ground in a passion, crying: "The

Ethiopian is a liar! no mortal man has ever bent that bow. What is impossible for my arm is possible for no other. In three days we will start for Ethiopia. I will challenge the impostor to a single combat, and ye shall see which is the stronger. Take up the bow, Prexaspes, and keep it carefully. The black liar shall be strangled with his own bow-string. This wood is really harder than iron, and I confess that the man who could bend it, would really be my master. I should not be ashamed to call him so, for he must be of better stuff than I."

As he finished speaking, Bartja appeared in the circle of assembled Persians. His glorious figure was set off to advantage by his rich dress, his features were bright with happiness and a feeling of conscious strength. He passed through the ranks of the Achæmenidæ with many a friendly nod, which was warmly returned, and going straight to his brother, kissed his robe, looked up frankly and cheerfully into his gloomy eyes, and said: "I am a little late, and ask your forgiveness, my lord and brother. Or have I really come in time? Yes, yes, I see there's no arrow in the target yet, so I am sure you, the best archer in the world, cannot have tried your strength yet. But you look so enquiringly at me. Then I will confess that our child kept me. The little creature laughed to-day for the first time, and was so charming with its mother, that I forgot how time was passing while I watched them. You have all full leave to laugh at my folly; I really don't know how to excuse myself. See, the little one has pulled my star from the chain. But I think, my brother, you will give me a new one to-day if I should hit the bull's eye. Shall I shoot first, or will you begin, my Sovereign?"

"Give him the bow, Prexaspes," said Cambyses, not even deigning to look at his brother.

Bartja took it and was proceeding to examine the wood and the string, when Cambyses suddenly called out, with a mocking laugh: "By Mithras, I believe you want to try your sweet looks on the bow, and win its favor in that fashion, as you do the hearts of men. Give it back to Prexaspes. It's easier to play with beautiful women and laughing children, than with a weapon like this, which mocks the strength even of real men."

Bartja blushed with anger and annoyance at this speech, which was uttered in the bitterest tone, picked up the giant arrow that lay before him, placed himself opposite the target, summoned all his strength, bent the bow, by an almost superhuman effort, and sent the arrow into the very centre of the target, where its iron point remained, while the wooden shaft split into a hundred shivers.[177]

Most of the Achæmenidæ burst into loud shouts of delight at this marvellous proof of strength; but Bartja's nearest friends turned pale and were silent; they were watching the king, who literally quivered with rage, and Bartja, who was radiant with pride and joy.

Cambyses was a fearful sight at that moment. It seemed to him as if that arrow, in piercing the target, had pierced his own heart, his strength, dignity and honor. Sparks floated before his eyes, in his ears was

177. Herodotus tells this story (III. 30.), and we are indebted to him also for our information of the events which follow. The following inscription, said to have been placed over the grave of Darius, and communicated by Onesikritus, (Strabo 730.) proves that the Persians were very proud of being reputed good archers: "I was a friend to my friends, the best rider and archer, a first-rate hunter; I could do everything."

a sound like the breaking of a stormy sea on the shore; his cheeks glowed and he grasped the arm of Prexaspes who was at his side. Prexaspes only too well understood what that pressure meant, when given by a royal hand, and murmured: "Poor Bartja!"

At last the king succeeded in recovering his presence of mind. Without saying a word, he threw a gold chain to his brother, ordered his nobles to follow him, and left the garden, but only to wander restlessly up and down his apartments, and try to drown his rage in wine. Suddenly he seemed to have formed a resolution and ordered all the courtiers, except Prexaspes, to leave the hall. When they were alone, he called out in a hoarse voice and with a look that proved the extent of his intoxication: "This life is not to be borne! Rid me of my enemy, and I will call you my friend and benefactor."

Prexaspes trembled, threw himself at the king's feet and raised his hands imploringly; but Cambyses was too intoxicated, and too much blinded by his hatred to understand the action. He fancied the prostration was meant as a sign of devotion to his will, signed to him to rise, and whispered, as if afraid of hearing his own words: "Act quickly and secretly; and, as you value your life, let no one know of the upstart's death. Depart, and when your work is finished, take as much as you like out of the treasury. But keep your wits about you. The boy has a strong arm and a winning tongue. Think of your own wife and children, if he tries to win you over with his smooth words."

As he spoke he emptied a fresh goblet of pure wine, staggered through the door of the room, calling out as he turned his back on Prexaspes: "Woe be to you if

that upstart, that woman's hero, that fellow who has robbed me of my honor, is left alive."

Long after he had left the hall, Prexaspes stood fixed on the spot where he had heard these words. The man was ambitious, but neither mean nor bad, and he felt crushed by the awful task allotted to him. He knew that his refusal to execute it would bring death or disgrace on himself and on his family; but he loved Bartja, and besides, his whole nature revolted at the thought of becoming a common, hired murderer. A fearful struggle began in his mind, and raged long after he left the palace. On the way home he met Crœsus and Darius. He fancied they would see from his looks that he was already on the way to a great crime, and hid himself behind the projecting gate of a large Egyptian house. As they passed, he heard Crœsus say: "I reproached him bitterly, little as he deserves reproach in general, for having given such an inopportune proof of his great strength. We may really thank the gods, that Cambyses did not lay violent hands on him in a fit of passion. He has followed my advice now and gone with his wife to Sais. For the next few days Bartja must not come near the king; the mere sight of him might rouse his anger again, and a monarch can always find unprincipled servants . . ."

The rest of the sentence died away in the distance, but the words he had heard were enough to make Prexaspes start, as if Crœsus had accused him of the shameful deed. He resolved in that moment that, come what would, his hands should not be stained with the blood of a friend. This resolution restored him his old erect bearing and firm gait for the time,

but when he reached the dwelling which had been assigned as his abode in Sais his two boys ran to the door to meet him. They had stolen away from the play-ground of the sons of the Achæmenidæ, (who, as was always the case, had accompanied the king and the army), to see their father for a moment. He felt a strange tenderness, which he could not explain to himself, on taking them in his arms, and kissed the beautiful boys once more on their telling him that they must go back to their play-ground again, or they should be punished. Within, he found his favorite wife playing with their youngest child, a sweet little girl. Again the same strange, inexplicable feeling of tenderness. He overcame it this time for fear of betraying his secret to his young wife, and retired to his own apartment early.

Night had come on.

The sorely-tried man could not sleep; he turned restlessly from side to side. The fearful thought, that his refusal to do the king's will would be the ruin of his wife and children, stood before his wakeful eyes in the most vivid colors. The strength to keep his good resolution forsook him, and even Crœsus' words, which, when he first heard them had given his nobler feelings the victory, now came in as a power on the other side. "A monarch can always find unprincipled servants." Yes, the words were an affront, but at the same time a reminder, that though he might defy the king's command a hundred others would be ready to obey it. No sooner had this thought become clear to him, than he started up, examined a number of daggers which hung, carefully arranged, above his bed, and laid the sharpest on the little table before him.

He then began to pace the room in deep thought, often going to the opening which served as a window, to cool his burning forehead and see if dawn were near.

When at last daylight appeared, he heard the sounding brass* calling the boys to early prayer. That reminded him of his sons and he examined the dagger a second time. A troop of gaily-dressed courtiers rode by on their way to the king. He put the dagger in his girdle; and at last, on hearing the merry laughter of his youngest child sound from the women's apartments, he set the tiara hastily on his head, left the house without taking leave of his wife, and, accompanied by a number of slaves, went down to the Nile. There he threw himself into a boat and ordered the rowers to take him to Sais.

A few hours after the fatal shooting-match, Bartja had followed Crœsus' advice and had gone off to Sais with his young wife. They found Rhodopis there. She had yielded to an irresistible impulse and, instead of returning to Naukratis, had stopped at Sais. Bartja's fall on stepping ashore had disturbed her, and she had with her own eyes seen an owl fly from the left side close by his head. These evil omens, to a heart which had by no means outgrown the superstitions of the age, added to a confused succession of distressing dreams which had disturbed her slumbers, and her usual wish to be always near Bartja and Sappho, led her to decide quickly on waiting for her granddaughter at Sais.

Bartja and Sappho were delighted to find such a

* See vol. I. p. 239.

welcome guest, and after she had dandled and played with her great grandchild, the little Parmys,[178] to her heart's content, they led her to the rooms which had been prepared for her. They were the same in which the unhappy Tachot had spent the last months of her fading existence. Rhodopis could not see all the little trifles which showed, not only the age and sex of the former occupant, but her tastes and disposition, without feeling very sad. On the dressing-table were a number of little ointment-boxes and small bottles for perfumes, cosmetics, washes and oils.[179] Two larger boxes, one in the form of a Nile-goose,[180] and another on the side of which a woman playing on a lute had been painted, had once contained the princess's costly golden ornaments, and the metal mirror with a handle in the form of a sleeping maiden,[181] had once reflected her beautiful face with its pale pink flush. Everything in the room, from the elegant little couch resting on lions' claws, to the delicately-carved ivory combs[182] on the toilet-table, proved that the outward adornments of life had possessed much charm for the former owner of these rooms. The golden *sistrum* and the delicately-wrought

178. Herodotus states, that beside Atossa, &c., Darius took a daughter of the deceased Bartja, named Parmys, to be his wife. Herod. III. 88. She is also mentioned VII. 78.

179. Wilkinson III. 381. 383. We learn from the monuments, that the Egyptians were accustomed to anoint themselves in divers ways from a very early period. We read of a paint for the eyes called *Mestem* as early as the 12th dynasty. The staining of the finger-nails so customary still in Egypt, though forbidden, was practised in the time of the Pharaohs, (this can be proved by the mummies), and perfumed locks were indispensable to a beauty of those days. *Papyr. d'Orb.* 9. 3. Plut. *Isis and Osiris* 15.

180. From Wilkinson II. 360. Leyden Museum.

181. From the handle of a saucer or vase used for ornaments, in Wilkinson II. 359. See also Wilkinson III. 386. 1. 2.

182. Combs found at Thebes. Wilkinson III. 381.

nabla, the strings of which had long ago been broken, testified to her taste for music, while the broken spindle* in the corner, and some unfinished nets of glass beads[183] shewed that she had been fond of woman's usual work.

It was a sad pleasure to Rhodopis to examine all these things, and the picture which she drew in her own mind of Tachot after the inspection, differed very little from the reality. At last interest and curiosity led her to a large painted chest. She lifted the light cover and found, first, a few dried flowers; then a ball, round which some skilful hand had wreathed roses and leaves, once fresh and bright, now, alas, long ago dead and withered. Beside these were a number of amulets in different forms, one representing the goddess of truth, another containing spells written on a strip of papyrus and concealed in a little golden case. Then her eyes fell on some letters written in the Greek character. She read them by the light of the lamp. They were from Nitetis in Persia to her supposed sister, and were written in ignorance of the latter's illness. When Rhodopis laid them down her eyes were full of tears. The dead girl's secret lay open before her. She knew now that Tachot had loved Bartja, that he had given her the faded flowers, and that she had wreathed the ball with roses because he had thrown it to her. The amulets must have been intended either to heal her sick heart, or to awaken love in his.

As she was putting the letters back in their old

183. Bead-work has been found on very many of the mummies in almost all the larger museums. In Wilkinson III. 90. 101. is a drawing of the celebrated large glass bead, in which a hieroglyphic inscription had been cut.

* See note 104.

place, she touched some cloths which seemed put in to fill up the bottom of the chest, and felt a hard round substance underneath. She raised them, and discovered a bust made of colored wax, such a wonderfully-exact portrait of Nitetis, that an involuntary exclamation of surprise broke from her, and it was long before she could turn her eyes away from Theodorus' marvellous work.

She went to rest and fell asleep, thinking of the sad fate of Nitetis, the Egyptian Princess.

The next morning Rhodopis went into the garden —the same into which we led our readers during the lifetime of Amasis—and found Bartja and Sappho in an arbor overgrown with vines.

Sappho was seated in a light wicker-work chair. Her child lay on her lap, stretching out its little hands and feet, sometimes to its father, who was kneeling on the ground before them, and then to its mother whose laughing face was bent down over her little one.

Bartja was very happy with his child. When the little creature buried its tiny fingers in his curls and beard, he would draw his head back to feel the strength of the little hand, would kiss its rosy feet, its little round white shoulders and dimpled arms. Sappho enjoyed the fun, always trying to draw the little one's attention to its father.

Sometimes, when she stooped down to kiss the rosy baby lips, her forehead would touch his curls and he would steal the kiss meant for the little Parmys.

Rhodopis watched them a long time unperceived, and, with tears of joy in her eyes, prayed the gods that they might long be as happy as they now were. At last she came into the arbor to wish them good-morn-

ing, and bestowed much praise on old Melitta for appearing at the right moment, parasol in hand, to take her charge out of the sunshine before it became too bright and hot, and put her to sleep.

The old slave had been appointed head-nurse to the high-born child, and acquitted herself in her new office with an amount of importance which was very comical. Hiding her old limbs under rich Persian robes, she moved about exulting in the new and delightful right to command, and kept her inferiors in perpetual motion.

Sappho followed Melitta into the palace, first whispering in her husband's ear with her arm round his neck: "Tell my grandmother everything and ask whether you are right."

Before he could answer, she had stopped his mouth with a kiss, and then hurried after the old woman who was departing with dignified steps.

The prince smiled as he watched her graceful walk and beautiful figure, and said, turning to Rhodopis: "Does not it strike you, that she has grown taller lately."

"It seems so," answered Rhodopis. "A woman's girlhood has its own peculiar charm, but her true dignity comes with motherhood. It is the feeling of having fulfilled her destiny, which raises her head and makes us fancy she has grown taller."

"Yes," said Bartja, "I think she is happy. Yesterday our opinions differed for the first time, and as she was leaving us just now, she begged me, privately, to lay the question before you, which I am very glad to do, for I honor your experience and wisdom just as much, as I love her childlike inexperience."

Bartja then told the story of the unfortunate shoot-

ing-match, finishing with these words: "Crœsus blames my imprudence, but I know my brother; I know that when he is angry he is capable of any act of violence, and it is not impossible that at the moment when he felt himself defeated he could have killed me; but I know too, that when his fierce passion has cooled, he will forget my boastful deed, and only try to excel me by others of the same kind. A year ago he was by far the best marksman in Persia, and would be so still, if drink and epilepsy had not undermined his strength. I must confess I feel as if I were becoming stronger every day."

"Yes," interrupted Rhodopis, "pure happiness strengthens a man's arm, just as it adds to the beauty of a woman, while intemperance and mental distress ruin both body and mind far more surely even than old age. My son, beware of your brother; his strong arm has become paralyzed, and his generosity can be forfeited too. Trust my experience, that the man who is the slave of one evil passsion, is very seldom master of the rest; besides which, no one feels humiliation so bitterly as he who is sinking—who knows that his powers are forsaking him. I say again, beware of your brother, and trust the voice of experience more than that of your own heart, which, because it is generous itself, believes every one else to be so."

"I see," said Bartja, "that you will take Sappho's side. Difficult as it will be for her to part from you, she has still begged me to return with her to Persia. She thinks that Cambyses may forget his anger, when I am out of sight. I thought she was over-anxious, and besides, it would disappoint me not to take part in the expedition against the Ethiopians."

"But I entreat you," interrupted Rhodopis, "to follow her advice. The gods only know what pain it will give me to lose you both, and yet I repeat a thousand times: Go back to Persia, and remember that none but fools stake life and happiness to no purpose. As to the war with Ethiopia, it is mere madness; instead of subduing those black inhabitants of the south, you yourselves will be conquered by heat, thirst and all the horrors of the desert. In saying this I refer to the campaigns in general; as to your own share in them, I can only say that if no fame is to be won there, you will be putting your own life and the happiness of your family in jeopardy literally for nothing, and that if, on the other hand, you should distinguish yourself again, it would only be giving fresh cause of jealousy and anger to your brother. No, go to Persia, as soon as you can."

Bartja was just beginning to make various objections to these arguments, when he caught sight of Prexaspes coming up to them, looking very pale.

After the usual greeting, the envoy whispered to Bartja, that he should like to speak with him alone. Rhodopis left them at once, and he began, playing with the rings on his right hand as he spoke, in a constrained, embarrassed way. "I come from the king. Your display of strength irritated him yesterday, and he does not wish to see you again for some time. His orders are, that you set out for Arabia to buy up all the camels[184] that are to be had. As these animals can

184. Camels are never represented on the Egyptian monuments, whereas they were in great use among the Arabians and Persians, and are now a necessity on the Nile. They must have existed in Egypt, however. Hekekyan-Bey discovered the bones of a dromedary in a deep bore. Representations of these creatures were probably forbid-

bear thirst very long, they are to be used in conveying food and water for our army on the Ethiopian campaign. There must be no delay. Take leave of your wife, and (I speak by the king's command) be ready to start before dark. You will be absent at least a month. I am to accompany you as far as Pelusium. Kassandane wishes to have your wife and child near her during your absence. Send them to Memphis as soon as possible; under the protection of the queen-mother, they will be in safety."

Prexaspes' short, constrained way of speaking did not strike Bartja. He rejoiced at what seemed to him great moderation on the part of his brother, and at receiving a commission which relieved him of all doubt on the question of leaving Egypt, gave his friend, (as he supposed him to be), his hand to kiss and an invitation to follow him into the palace.

In the cool of the evening, he took a short but very affectionate farewell of Sappho and his child, who was asleep in Melitta's arms, told his wife to set out as soon as possible on her journey to Kassandane, called out jestingly to his mother-in-law, that at least this time she had been mistaken in her judgment of a man's character, (meaning his brother's), and sprang on to his horse.

As Prexaspes was mounting, Sappho whispered to him, "Take care of that reckless fellow, and remind him of me and his child, when you see him running into unnecessary danger."

"I shall have to leave him at Pelusium," answered

den. We know this was the case with the cock, of which bird there were large numbers in Egypt. It is remarkable, that camels were not introduced into Barbary until after the birth of Christ. H. Barth, *Wanderungen am Gestade des Mittelmeers p.* 3 and following.

the envoy, busying himself with the bridle of his horse in order to avoid meeting her eyes.

"Then may the gods take him into their keeping!" exclaimed Sappho, clasping her husband's hand, and bursting into tears, which she could not keep back. Bartja looked down and saw his usually trustful wife in tears. He felt sadder than he had ever felt before. Stooping down lovingly from his saddle, he put his strong arm round her waist, lifted her up to him, and as she stood supporting herself on his foot in the stirrup, pressed her to his heart, as if for a long last farewell. He then let her safely and gently to the ground, took his child up to him on the saddle, kissed and fondled the little creature, and told her laughingly to make her mother very happy while he was away, exchanged some warm words of farewell with Rhodopis, and then, spurring his horse till the creature reared, dashed through the gateway of the Pharaohs' palace, with Prexaspes at his side.

When the sound of the horses' hoofs had died away in the distance, Sappho laid her head on her grandmother's shoulder and wept uncontrollably. Rhodopis remonstrated and blamed, but all in vain, she could not stop her tears.

CHAPTER XV.

On the morning after the trial of the bow, Cambyses was seized by such a violent attack of his old illness, that he was forced to keep his room for two days and nights, ill in mind and body; at times raging

like a madman, at others weak and powerless as a little child.

On the third day he recovered consciousness and remembered the awful charge he had laid on Prexaspes, and that it was only too possible he might have executed it already. At this thought he trembled, as he had never trembled in his life before. He sent at once for the envoy's eldest son, who was one of the royal cup-bearers. The boy said his father had left Memphis, without taking leave of his family. He then sent for Darius, Zopyrus and Gyges, knowing how tenderly they loved Bartja, and enquired after their friend. On hearing from them that he was at Sais, he sent the three youths thither at once, charging them, if they met Prexaspes on the way, to send him back to Memphis without delay. This haste and the king's strange behavior were quite incomprehensible to the young Achæmenidæ; nevertheless they set out on their journey with all speed, fearing that something must be wrong.

Cambyses, meanwhile, was miserably restless, inwardly cursed his habit of drinking and tasted no wine the whole of that day. Seeing his mother in the palace-gardens, he avoided her; he durst not meet her eye.

The next eight days passed without any sign of Prexaspes' return; they seemed to the king like a year. A hundred times he sent for the young cup-bearer and asked if his father had returned; a hundred times he received the same disappointing answer.

At sunset on the thirteenth day, Kassandane sent to beg a visit from him. The king went at once, for now he longed to look on the face of his mother; he fancied it might give him back his lost sleep.

After he had greeted her with a tenderness so rare from him, that it astonished her, he asked for what reason she had desired his presence. She answered, that Bartja's wife had arrived at Memphis under singular circumstances and had said she wished to present a gift to Cambyses. He gave Sappho an audience at once, and heard from her that Prexaspes had brought her husband an order to start for Arabia, and herself a summons to Memphis from the queen-mother. At these words the king turned very pale, and his features were agitated with pain as he looked at his brother's lovely young wife. She felt that something unusual was passing in his mind, and such dreadful forebodings arose in her own, that she could only offer him the gift in silence and with trembling hands.

"My husband sends you this," she said, pointing to the ingeniously-wrought box, which contained the wax likeness of Nitetis. Rhodopis had advised her to take this to the king in Bartja's name, as a propitiatory offering.

Cambyses showed no curiosity as to the contents of the box, gave it in charge to a eunuch, said a few words which seemed meant as thanks to his sister-in-law, and left the women's apartments without even so much as enquiring after Atossa, whose existence he seemed to have forgotten.

He had come to his mother, believing that the visit would comfort and calm his troubled mind, but Sappho's words had destroyed his last hope, and with that his last possibility of rest or peace. By this time either Prexaspes would already have committed the murder, or perhaps at that very moment might be raising his dagger to plunge it into Bartja's heart.

How could he ever meet his mother again after Bartja's death? how could he answer her questions or those of that lovely Sappho, whose large, anxious, appealing eyes had touched him so strangely?

A voice within told him, that his brother's murder would be branded as a cowardly, unnatural, and unjust deed, and he shuddered at the thought. It seemed fearful, unbearable, to be called an assassin. He had already caused the death of many a man without the least compunction, but that had been done either in fair fight, or openly before the world. He was king, and what the king did was right. Had he killed Bartja with his own hand, his conscience would not have reproached him; but to have had him privately put out of the way, after he had given so many proofs of possessing first-rate manly qualities, which deserved the highest praise—this tortured him with a feeling of rage at his own want of principle,—a feeling of shame and remorse which he had never known before. He began to despise himself. The consciousness of having acted, and wished to act justly, forsook him, and he began to fancy, that every one who had been executed by his orders, had been, like Bartja, an innocent victim of his fierce anger. These thoughts became so intolerable, that he began to drink once more in the hope of drowning them. But now the wine had precisely the opposite effect, and brought such tormenting thoughts, that, worn out as he was already by epileptic fits and his habit of drinking, both body and mind threatened to give way to the agitation caused by the events of the last months. Burning and shivering by turns, he was at last forced to lie down. While the attendants were disrobing him, he remembered his brother's present, had

the box fetched and opened, and then desired to be left alone. The Egyptian paintings on the outside of the box reminded him of Nitetis, and then he asked himself what she would have said to his deed. Fever had already begun, and his mind was wandering as he took the beautiful wax bust out of the box. He stared in horror at the dull, immovable eyes. The likeness was so perfect, and his judgment so weakened by wine and fever, that he fancied himself the victim of some spell, and yet could not turn his eyes from those dear features. Suddenly the eyes seemed to move. He was seized with terror, and, in a kind of convulsion, hurled what he thought had become a living head against the wall. The hollow, brittle wax broke into a thousand fragments, and Cambyses sank back on to his bed with a groan.

From that moment the fever increased. In his delirium the banished Phanes appeared, singing a scornful Greek song and deriding him in such infamous words, that his fists clenched with rage. Then he saw his friend and adviser, Crœsus, threatening him in the very same words of warning, which he had used when Bartja had been sentenced to death by his command on account of Nitetis: "Beware of shedding a brother's blood; the smoke thereof will rise to heaven and become a cloud, that must darken the days of the murderer, and at last cast down the lightnings of heaven upon his head."

And in his delirious fancy this figure of speech became a reality. A rain of blood streamed down upon him from dark clouds; his clothes and hands were wet with the loathsome moisture. He went down to the Nile to cleanse himself, and suddenly saw Nitetis coming

towards him. She had the same sweet smile with which Theodorus had modelled her. Enchanted with this lovely vision, he fell down before her and took her hand, but he had scarcely touched it, when drops of blood appeared at the tips of her delicate fingers, and she turned away from him with every sign of horror. He humbly implored her to forgive him and come back; she remained inexorable. He grew angry, and threatened her, first with his wrath, and then with awful punishments. At last, as she only answered his threats by a low scornful laugh, he ventured to throw his dagger at her. She crumbled at once into a thousand pieces, like the wax statue. But the derisive laughter echoed on, and became louder. Many voices joined in it, each trying to outbid the other. And the voices of Bartja and Nitetis were the loudest,—their tone the most bitter. At last he could bear these fearful sounds no longer and stopped his ears; this was of no use, and he buried his head, first in the glowing desert-sand and then in the icy cold Nile-water, until his senses forsook him. On awaking, the actual state of things seemed incomprehensible to him. He had gone to bed in the evening, and yet he now saw, by the direction of the sun's rays which fell on his bed, that, instead of dawning as he had expected, the day was growing dark. There could be no mistake; he heard the chorus of priests singing farewell to the setting Mithras.

Then he heard a number of people moving behind a curtain, which had been hung up at the head of his bed. He tried to turn in his bed, but could not; he was too weak. At last, finding it impossible to discover whether he was in real life or still in a dream, he called for his dressers and the courtiers, who were accustomed to be

present when he rose. They appeared in a moment, and with them his mother, Prexaspes, a number of the learned among the Magi, and some Egyptians who were unknown to him. They told him, that he had been lying in a violent fever for weeks, and had only escaped death by the special mercy of the gods, the skill of the physicians, and the unwearied nursing of his mother. He looked enquiringly first at Kassandane, then at Prexaspes, lost consciousness again, and fell into a deep sleep, from which he awoke the next morning with renewed strength.

In four days he was strong enough to sit up and able to question Prexaspes on the only subject, which occupied his thoughts.

In consideration of his master's weakness the envoy was beginning an evasive reply, when a threatening movement of the king's gaunt, worn hand, and a look which had by no means lost its old power of awing into submission, brought him to the point at once, and in the hope of giving the king a great pleasure and putting his mind completely at rest, he began: "Rejoice, O King! the youth, who dared to desire the disparagement of thy glory, is no more. This hand slew him and buried his body at Baal-Zephon. The sand of the desert and the unfruitful waves of the Red Sea were the only witnesses of the deed;[185] and no creature knows thereof beside thyself, O King, thy servant Prexaspes, and the gulls and cormorants, that hover over his grave."

The king uttered a piercing shriek of rage, was seized

185. Herodotus says (III. 30.): "Some say that after Prexaspes had led Bartja to the Red Sea (*ἐς τὴν Ἐρυθρὴν θάλασσαν . . ποσαγαγόντα*) he murdered him there." It is possible, but by no means certain, that in this place Herodotus is speaking of the Persian Gulf.

by a fresh shivering-fit, and sank back once more in raving delirium.

Long weeks passed, every day of which threatened his death. At last, however, his strong constitution gained the day, but his mind had given way, and remained disordered and weak up to his last hour.

When he was strong enough to leave the sick-room and to ride and shoot once more, he abandoned himself more than ever to the pleasure of drinking, and lost every remnant of self-control.

The delusion had fixed itself in his disordered mind, that Bartja was not dead, but transformed into the bow of the King of Ethiopia, and that the Feruer* of his father Cyrus had commanded him to restore Bartja to his original form, by subjugating the black nation.

This idea, which he confided to every one about him as a great secret, pursued him day and night and gave him no rest, until he had started for Ethiopia with an immense host. He was forced, however, to return without having accomplished his object, after having miserably lost the greater part of his army by heat and the scarcity of provisions. An historian, who may almost be spoken of as contemporary,[186] tells us that the wretched soldiers, after having subsisted on herbs as long as they could, came to deserts where there was no sign of vegetation, and in their despair resorted to an expedient almost too fearful to describe. Lots were drawn by every ten men, and he on whom the lot fell was killed and eaten by the other nine.

At last things went so far, that his subjects compelled

186. Herodotus visited Egypt some 60 years after the death of Cambyses, 454 B. C. He describes the Ethiopian campaign, III. 25.

* The spiritual part of man—his soul and reason. See vol. 1. note 271.

this madman to return, but only, with their slavish Asiatic feelings, to obey him all the more blindly, when they found themselves once more in inhabited regions.

On reaching Memphis with the wreck of his army, he found the Egyptians in glorious apparel celebrating a festival. They had found a new Apis* and were rejoicing over the reappearance of their god, incarnate in the sacred bull.

As Cambyses had heard at Thebes, that the army he had sent against the oasis of Ammon[187] in the Libyan desert, had perished miserably in a Khamsin, or Simoom,[188] and that his fleet, which was to conquer Carthage, had refused to fight with a people of their own race,[189] he fancied that the Memphians must be celebrating a festival of joy at the news of his misfortunes, sent for their principal men, and after reproaching them with their conduct, asked why they had been gloomy and morose after his victories, but joyous at hearing of his misfortunes. The Memphians answered by explaining the real ground for their merry-making, and told him, that

187. The oracle of Jupiter Ammon, which afterwards became so celebrated through having pronounced Alexander to be a son of the god, was in this oasis. Curtius IV. 7. Crœsus had already bestowed attention upon this oracle. Herod. I. 46. On its mode of utterance. Iamblichus, *De Myst.* 3. Tacit. *Hist.* IV, 83. On this marvellous oasis, which is now called Siwah, see Minutoli, *Reise zum Tempel des Jupiter Ammon, &c.* and especially Parthey's *zur Erdkunde des alten Aegyptens.* Berlin 1859. Also Brugsch, *Geographische Inschriften.* Popularly described by G. Rasch, and recently by G. Rohlfs. The oasis is called Wach or el Wach, *Abulfedæ Descrip. Aegypt.* 1746.

188. A fearful south-west wind, which blows in Egypt and the Libyan desert. The best information on this is to be found in Gregoire's *Du Khamsine et de ses efforts.* A similar wind, known as the "Samum," is called by the Turks "Schamyele." Possibly the dreadful fiend Samiel, so fatal to the caravans, derived his name from this wind.

189. Herod. III. 26. 17. 19.

* See note 161.

the appearance of the sacred bull was always celebrated in Egypt with the greatest rejoicings. Cambyses called them liars, and, as such, sentenced them to death.[190] He then sent for the priests; received, however, exactly the same answer from them.

With the bitterest irony he asked to be allowed to make the acquaintance of this new god, and commanded them to bring him. The bull Apis was brought and the king told that he was the progeny of a virgin cow and a moonbeam, that he must be black, with a white triangular spot on the forehead, the likeness of an eagle on his back, and on his side the crescent moon. There must be two kinds of hair on his tail, and on his tongue an excrescence in the form of the sacred beetle Scarabæus.[191]

190. So says Herod. III. 27. Plutarch, *Is. and Os.* 12. In several places we have laid stress upon the Persians' esteem for truth. Things are, alas, very different now. Brugsch, in his *Perser und Germanen*, assures us, that he had nowhere met with such hardened liars as in Persia. In the book of *Kawus*, the wise Shah *Kjekjawus*, as early as the 11th century A. D., advises his son and successor rather to tell a lie, which sounds like truth, than the truth when it seems improbable. *B. d. Kawus*, translated by Diez. p. 376. Herodotus, on the other hand, writing (I. 138.) of the same nation in the 5th century B. C. says: "They hold lying and debt to be the greatest disgrace," and in the Vendidad lying is constantly spoken of as one of the most grievous sins. Brugsch may be right in saying, that such a deceitful people needed repeated commands on the subject of truth. See Vol. I. note 142.

191. On the characteristic signs of Apis, see Herod. III. 28. Whether the white spot on his forehead was to be a triangle or a square, depends on the different readings of Herodotus; the testimony of the monuments is for the triangle. According to Ammian Marcellinus, he was to have a half-moon on the right side; Strabo (807) speaks of him as black with a white forehead, and white on some other portions of his body. Aelian says the sacred bull had twenty-nine marks. Ovid calls him: *variis coloribus Apis*. The monuments explain these differences, by proving that the sacred bulls were not always alike. Sometimes Apis is represented entirely black, at others with characteristic white spots. Champollion, *Pantheon Eg.* Pl. 37. On the Apis-statue, discovered by Mariette and now in Paris, many of these marks have been traced. They are painted on the body of the animal in black. The coloring of the head, unfortunately, has been rubbed off. There are several bronze figures of the god with the sun-disc and the Uræus

When Cambyses saw this deified creature he could discover nothing remarkable in him, and was so enraged that he plunged his sword into its side.[192] As the blood streamed from the wound and the animal fell, he broke out into a piercing laugh, and cried: "Ye fools! so your gods are flesh and blood; they can be wounded. Such folly is worthy of you. But ye shall find, that it is not so easy to make a fool of me. Ho, guards! flog these priests soundly, and kill every one whom you find taking part in this mad celebration." The command was obeyed and fearfully exasperated the Egyptians.

Apis died of his wound; the Memphians buried him secretly in the vaults belonging to the sacred bulls,* near the Serapeum, and, led by Psamtik, attempted an insurrection against the Persians. This was very quickly put down, however, and cost Psamtik his life,[193]—a life the stains and severities of which deserve to be forgiven, in consideration of his unwearied, ceaseless efforts to deliver his people from a foreign yoke, and his death in the cause of freedom.

Cambyses' madness had meanwhile taken fresh forms. After the failure of his attempt to restore Bartja, (transformed as he fancied into a bow) to his original

between his horns, a broad collar round his neck, and on his back two vultures, whose extended wings reach to the fore and hind legs; between these birds a small but costly covering is spread over his back. On the forehead is a spot in the form of the triangle, which had a symbolic meaning. "All the good skin-marks" of the Apis are frequently mentioned on the monuments.

192. According to Herod. III. 29. Cambyses' sword slipped and ran into the leg of the sacred bull. As the king died also of a wound in the thigh, this just suits Herodotus, who always tries to put the retribution that comes after presumptuous crime in the strongest light; but it is very unlikely that the bull should have died of a mere thigh-wound.

193. Herod. III. 15.

* See note 161.

shape, his irritability increased so frightfully that a single word, or even a look, was sufficient to make him furious.

Still his true friend and counsellor, Crœsus, never left him, though the king had more than once given him over to the guards for execution. But the guards knew their master; they took good care not to lay hands on the old man, and felt sure of impunity, as the king would either have forgotten his command, or repented of it by the next day, Once, however, the miserable whip-bearers paid a fearful penalty for their lenity. Cambyses, while rejoicing that Crœsus was saved, ordered his deliverers to be executed for disobedience without mercy.[194]

It would be repugnant to us to repeat all the tales of barbarous cruelties, which are told of Cambyses at this insane period of his life; but we cannot resist mentioning a few which seem to us especially characteristic.

While sitting at table one day, already somewhat intoxicated, he asked Prexaspes what the Persians thought of him. The envoy, who in hopes of deadening his tormenting conscience by the performance of noble and dangerous acts, let no opportunity pass of trying to exercise a good influence over his sovereign, answered that they extolled him on every point, but thought he was too much addicted to wine.

These words, though spoken half in jest, put the king into a violent passion, and he almost shrieked: "So the Persians say, that the wine has taken away my senses, do they? on the contrary, I'll show them that they've lost their own." And as he spoke he bent his bow, took aim for a moment at Prexaspes' eldest son, who, as cup-bearer, was standing at the back

194. Herod. III. 36.

of the hall waiting for and watching every look of his sovereign, and shot him in the breast. He then gave orders that the boy's body should be opened and examined. The arrow had pierced the centre of his heart. This delighted the senseless tyrant, and he called out with a laugh: "Now you see, Prexaspes, it's the Persians who have lost their judgment, not I. Could any one have hit the mark better?"

Prexaspes stood there, pale and motionless, compelled to watch the horrid scene, like Niobe when chained to Sipylus. His servile spirit bowed before the ruler's power, instead of arming his right hand with the dagger of revenge, and when the frantic king asked him the same question a second time, he actually answered, pressing his hand on his heart: "A god could not have hit the mark more exactly." [195]

A few weeks after this, the king went to Sais, and there was shown the rooms formerly occupied by his bride. This brought back all the old painful recollections in full force, and at the same time his clouded memory reminded him, though without any clearness of detail, that Amasis had deceived both Nitetis and himself. He cursed the dead king and furiously demanded to be taken to the temple of Neith, where his mummy was laid. There he tore the embalmed body out of its sarcophagus, caused it to be scourged, to be stabbed with pins, had the hair torn off and maltreated it in every possible way. In conclusion, and contrary to the ancient Persian religious law, which held the pollution of pure fire by corpses to be a deadly sin,

195. Herod. III. 35. certainly means by τὸν θεὸν Apollo who hits his mark from afar. Seneca (*De Ira* III. 14.), in telling the story, says plainly "Apollo."

he caused Amasis' dead body to be burnt, and condemned the mummy of his first wife, which lay in a sarcophagus at Thebes, her native place, to the same fate.[196]

On his return to Memphis, Cambyses did not shrink from personally ill-treating his wife and sister, Atossa.

He had ordered a combat of wild beasts to take place, during which, amongst other entertainments of the same kind, a dog was to fight with a young lion. The lion had conquered his antagonist, when another dog, the brother of the conquered one, broke away from his chain, attacked the lion, and with the help of the wounded dog, vanquished him.

This scene delighted Cambyses, but Kassandane and Atossa, who had been forced by the king's command to be present, began to weep aloud.

The tyrant was astonished, and on asking the reason for their tears, received as answer from the impetuous Atossa, that the brave creature who had risked its own life to save its brother, reminded her of Bartja. She would not say by whom he had been murdered, but his murder had never been avenged.

These words so roused the king's anger, and so goaded his conscience, that in a fit of insane fury he struck the daring woman, and might possibly have killed her, if his mother had not thrown herself into his arms and exposed her own body to his mad blows.[197]

Her voice and action checked his rage, for he had

196. Herod. III. 16. The officers of the French frigate Luxor, which was sent to fetch the obelisk of Thebes, found a sarcophagus at el Qurnah containing a half-burnt mummy, probably that of the wife of Amasis.

197. Herod. III. 32.

not lost reverence for his mother; but her look of intense anger and contempt, which he clearly saw and could not forget, begot a fresh delusion in his mind. He believed from that moment, that the eyes of women had power to poison him; he started and hid himself behind his companions whenever he saw a woman, and at last commanded that all the female inhabitants of the palace at Memphis, his mother not excepted, should be sent back to Ecbatana. Araspes and Gyges were appointed to be their escort thither.

The caravan of queens and princesses had arrived at Sais; they alighted at the royal palace. Crœsus had accompanied them thus far on their way from Egypt.

Kassandane had altered very much during the last few years. Grief and suffering had worn deep lines in her once beautiful face, though they had had no power to bow her stately figure.

Atossa, on the contrary, was more beautiful than ever, notwithstanding all she had suffered. The refractory and impetuous child, the daring spirited girl, had developed into a dignified, animated and determined woman. The serious side of life, and three sad years passed with her ungovernable husband and brother, had been first-rate masters in the school of patience, but they had not been able to alienate her heart from her first love. Sappho's friendship had made up to her in some measure for the loss of Darius.

The young Greek had become another creature, since the mysterious departure of her husband. Her rosy color and her lovely smile were both gone. But

she was wonderfully beautiful, in spite of her paleness, her downcast eyelashes and languid attitude. She looked like Ariadne waiting for Theseus. Longing and expectation lay in every look, in the low tone of her voice, in her measured walk. At the sound of approaching steps, the opening of a door or the unexpected tones of a man's voice, she would start, get up and listen, and then sink back into the old waiting, longing attitude, disappointed but not hopeless. She began to dream again, as she had been so fond of doing in her girlish days.

She was her old self only when playing with her child. Then the color came back to her cheeks, her eyes sparkled, she seemed once more to live in the present, and not only in the past or future.

Her child was everything to her. In that little one Bartja seemed to be still alive, and she could love the child with all her heart and strength, without taking one iota from her love to him. With this little creature the gods had mercifully given her an aim in life and a link with the lower world, the really precious part of which had seemed to vanish with her vanished husband. Sometimes, as she looked into her baby's blue eyes, so wonderfully like Bartja's, she thought: Why was not she born a boy? He would have grown more like his father from day to day, and at last, if such a thing indeed could ever be, a second Bartja would have stood before me.

But such thoughts generally ended soon in her pressing the little one closer than ever to her heart, and blaming herself for ingratitude and folly.

One day Atossa put the same idea in words, exclaiming: "If Parmys were only a boy! He would

have grown up exactly like his father, and have been a second Cyrus for Persia." Sappho smiled sadly at her friend, and covered the little one with kisses, but Kassandane said: "Be thankful to the gods, my child, for having given you a daughter. If Parmys were a boy, he would be taken from you as soon as he had reached his sixth year, to be brought up with the sons of the other Achæmenidæ, but your daughter will remain your own for many years."

Sappho trembled at the mere thought of parting from her child; she pressed its little fair curly head close to her breast, and never found fault with her treasure again for being a girl.

Atossa's friendship was a great comfort to her poor wounded heart. With her she could speak of Bartja as much and as often as she would, and was always certain of a kind and sympathizing listener. Atossa had loved her vanished brother very dearly. And even a stranger would have enjoyed hearing Sappho tell of her past happiness. Her words rose into real eloquence in speaking of those bright days; she seemed like an inspired poetess. Then she would take her lyre, and with her clear, sweet, plaintive voice sing the love-songs of the elder Sappho, in which all her own deepest feelings were so truly expressed, and fancy herself once more with her lover sitting under the sweet-scented acanthus in the quiet night, and forget the sad reality of her present life. And when, with a deep sigh, she laid aside the lyre and came back out of this dream-kingdom, the tears were always to be seen in Kassandane's eyes, though she did not understand the language in which Sappho had been singing, and Atossa would bend down and kiss her forehead.

Thus three long years had passed, during which Sappho had seldom seen her grandmother, for, as the mother of Parmys, she was by the king's command, forbidden to leave the harem, unless permitted and accompanied either by Kassandane or the eunuchs.

On the present occasion Crœsus, who had always loved, and loved her still, like a daughter, had sent for Rhodopis to Sais. He, as well as Kassandane, understood her wish to take leave of this, her dearest and most faithful friend, before setting out for Persia; besides which Kassandane had a great wish to see one in whose praise she had heard so much. When Sappho's tender and sad farewell was over therefore, Rhodopis was summoned to the queen-mother.

A stranger, who saw these two women together, would have thought both were queens; it was impossible to decide which of the two had most right to the title.

Crœsus, standing as he did in as close a relation to the one as to the other, undertook the office of interpreter, and the ready intellect of Rhodopis helped him to carry on an uninterrupted flow of conversation.

Rhodopis, by her own peculiar attractions, soon won the heart of Kassandane, and the queen knew no better way of proving this than by offering, in Persian fashion, to grant her some wish.

Rhodopis hesitated a moment; then raising her hands as if in prayer, she cried: "Leave me my Sappho, the consolation and beauty of my old age."

Kassandane smiled sadly. "It is not in my power to grant that wish," she answered. "The laws of Persia command, that the children of the Achæmenidæ shall be brought up at the king's gate. I dare not

allow the little Parmys, Cyrus' only grandchild, to leave me, and, much as Sappho loves you, you know she would not part from her child. Indeed, she has become so dear to me now, and to my daughter, that though I well understand your wish to have her, I could never allow Sappho to leave us."

Seeing that Rhodopis' eyes were filling with tears, Kassandane went on: "There is, however, a good way out of our perplexity. Leave Naukratis, and come with us to Persia. There you can spend your last years with us and with your granddaughter, and shall be provided with a royal maintenance."

Rhodopis shook her head, hoary but still so beautiful, and answered in a suppressed voice: "I thank you, noble queen, for this gracious invitation, but I feel unable to accept it. Every fibre of my heart is rooted in Greece, and I should be tearing my life out by leaving it forever. I am so accustomed to constant activity, perfect freedom, and a stirring exchange of thought, that I should languish and die in the confinement of a harem. Crœsus had already prepared me for the gracious proposal you have just made, and I have had a long and difficult battle to fight, before I could decide on resigning my dearest blessing for my highest good. It is not easy, but it is glorious,—it is more worthy of the Greek name—to live a good and beautiful life, than a happy one—to follow duty rather than pleasure. My heart will follow Sappho, but my intellect and experience belong to the Greeks; and if you should ever hear that the people of Hellas are ruled by themselves alone, by their own gods, their own laws, the beautiful and the good, then you will know that the work on which Rhodopis, in league with the

noblest and best of her countrymen, has staked her life, is accomplished. Be not angry with the Greek woman, who confesses that she would rather die free as a beggar than live in bondage as a queen, though envied by the whole world."

Kassandane listened in amazement. She only understood part of what Rhodopis had said, but felt that she had spoken well and nobly, and at the conclusion gave her her hand to kiss. After a short pause, Kassandane said: "Do what you think right, and remember, that as long as I and my daughter live, your granddaughter will never want for true and faithful love."

"Your noble countenance and the fame of your great virtue are warrant enough for that." answered Rhodopis.

"And also," added the queen, "the duty which lies upon me to make good the wrong, that has been done your Sappho."

She sighed painfully and went on: "The little Parmys shall be carefully educated. She seems to have much natural talent, and can sing the songs of her native country already after her mother. I shall do nothing to check her love of music, though, in Persia the religious services are the only occasions in which that art is studied by any but the lower classes."[198]

At these words Rhodopis' face glowed. "Will you permit me to speak openly, O Queen?" she said.

"Speak without fear," was Kassandane's answer.

"When you sighed so painfully just now in speaking of your dear lost son, I thought: Perhaps that

198. *Book of Kawus* p. 732. Brugsch, *Reise nach Persien* p. 389. On the musical instruments used in Persia, see Chardin V. p. 69–71.

brave young hero might have been still living, if the Persians had understood better how to educate their sons. Bartja told me in what that education consisted. To shoot, throw the spear, ride, hunt, speak the truth, and perhaps also to distinguish between the healing and noxious properties of certain plants: that is deemed a sufficient educational provision for a man's life. The Greek boys are just as carefully kept to the practice of exercises for hardening and bracing the body; for these exercises are the founders and preservers of health, the physician is only its repairer and restorer. If, however, by constant practice a Greek youth were to attain to the strength of a bull, the truth of the Deity, and the wisdom of the most learned Egyptian priest, we should still look down upon him were he wanting in two things which only early example and music, combined with these bodily exercises, can give: grace and symmetry. You smile because you do not understand me, but I can prove to you that music, which, from what Sappho tells me, is not without its moving power for your heart, is as important an element in education as gymnastics, and, strange as it may sound, has an equal share in effecting the perfection of both body and mind. The man who devotes his attention exclusively to music will, if he be of a violent disposition, lose his savage sternness at first; he will become gentle and pliable as metal in the fire. But at last his courage will disappear too; his passionate temper will have changed into irritability, and he will be of little worth as a warrior, the calling and character most desired in your country. If, on the other hand, he confines himself to gymnastics only, he will, like Cambyses, excel in manliness and strength; but his mind—here

my comparison ceases—will remain obtuse and blind, his perceptions will be confused, He will not listen to reason, but will endeavor to carry everything by force, and, lacking grace and proportion, his life will probably become a succession of rude and violent deeds. On this account we conclude that music is necessary not only for the mind, and gymnastics not only for the body, but that both, working together, elevate and soften the mind and strengthen the body—give manly grace, and graceful manliness."[199]

After a moment's pause Rhodopis went on: "The youth who has not received such an education, whose roughness has never been checked even in childhood, who has been allowed to vent his temper on every one, receiving flattery in return and never hearing reproof; who has been allowed to command before he has learnt to obey, and who has been brought up in the belief that splendor, power and riches are the highest good, can never possibly attain to the perfect manhood, which we beseech the gods to grant our boys. And if this unfortunate being happens to have been born with an impetuous disposition, ungovernable and eager passions, these will be only nourished and increased by bodily exercise unaccompanied by the softening influence of music, so that at last a child, who possibly came into the world with good qualities, will, merely through the defects in his education, degenerate into a destructive animal, a sensual self-destroyer, and a mad and furious tyrant."

Rhodopis had become animated with her subject. She ceased, saw tears in the eyes of the queen, and

199. The fundamental ideas of this speech are drawn from Plato's ideal "State."

felt that she had gone too far and had wounded a mother's heart,—a heart full of noble feeling. She touched her robe, kissed its border, and said softly: "Forgive me."

Kassandane looked her forgiveness, courteously saluted Rhodopis and prepared to leave the room. On the threshold, however, she stopped and said: "I am not angry. Your reproaches are just; but you too must endeavor to forgive, for I can assure you that he who has murdered the happiness of your child and of mine, though the most powerful, is of all mortals the most to be pitied. Farewell! Should you ever stand in need of ought, remember Cyrus' widow, and how she wished to teach you, that the virtues the Persians desire most in their children are magnanimity and liberality."

After saying this she left the apartment.

On the same day Rhodopis heard that Phanes was dead. He had retired to Crotona in the neighborhood of Pythagoras and there passed his time in reflection, dying with the tranquillity of a philosopher.

She was deeply affected at this news and said to Crœsus: "Greece has lost one of her ablest men, but there are many, who will grow up to be his equals. The increasing power of Persia causes me no fear; indeed, I believe that when the barbarous lust of conquest stretches out its hand towards us, our many-headed Greece will rise as a giant with one head of divine power, before which mere barbaric strength must bow as surely as body before spirit."

Three days after this, Sappho said farewell for the

last time to her grandmother, and followed the queens to Persia. Notwithstanding the events which afterwards took place, she continued to believe that Bartja would return, and full of love, fidelity and tender remembrance, devoted herself entirely to the education of her child and the care of her aged mother-in-law, Kassandane.

Little Parmys became very beautiful, and learnt to love the memory of her vanished father next to the gods of her native land, for her mother's tales had brought him as vividly before her as if he had been still alive and present with them.

Atossa's subsequent good fortune and happiness did not cool her friendship. She always called Sappho her sister. The hanging-gardens were the latter's residence in summer, and in her conversations there with Kassandane and Atossa one name was often mentioned—the name of her, who had been the innocent cause of events which had decided the destinies of great kingdoms and noble lives—the Egyptian Princess.

CHAPTER XVI.

HERE we might end this tale, but that we feel bound to give our readers some account of the last days of Cambyses. We have already described the ruin of his mind, but his physical end remains still to be told, and also the subsequent fate of some of the other characters in our history.

A short time after the departure of the queens, news

reached Naukratis that Oroetes, the satrap of Lydia, had, by a stratagem, allured his old enemy, Polykrates, to Sardis and crucified him there,* thus fulfilling what Amasis had prophecied of the tyrant's mournful end. This act the satrap had committed on his own responsibility, events having taken place in the Median kingdom which threatened the fall of the Achæmenidæan dynasty.[200]

The king's long absence in a foreign country had either weakened or entirely dissipated, the fear which the mere mention of his name had formerly inspired in those who felt inclined to rebel. The awe that his subjects had formerly felt for him, vanished at the tidings of his madness, and the news that he had wantonly exposed the lives of thousands of their countrymen to certain death in the deserts of Libya and Ethiopia, inspired the enraged Asiatics with a hatred which, when skilfully fed by the powerful Magi, soon roused, first the Medes and Assyrians, and then the Persians, to defection and open insurrection. Motives of self-interest led the ambitious high-priest, Oropastes, whom Cambyses had appointed regent in his absence, to place himself at the head of this movement. He flattered the people by remitting their taxes, by large gifts and larger promises, and finding his clemency gratefully recognized, determined on an imposture, by which he hoped to win the crown of Persia for his own family.

He had not forgotten the marvellous likeness between

200. Herodotus has been our main guide in this part of our tale also (Herod. III. 61–68.); and the inscription of Bisitun or Behistân. Ktesias lived at the Persian court, it is true, but his information, though in this place it somewhat tallies with that of Herodotus, is far more improbable.

* See note 75.

his brother Gaumata (who had been condemned to lose his ears) and Bartja, the son of Cyrus, and on hearing that the latter, the universal favorite, as he well knew, of the Persian nation, had disappeared, resolved to turn this to account by passing off his brother as the vanished prince, and setting him on the throne in place of Cambyses. The hatred felt throughout the entire kingdom towards their insane king, and the love and attachment of the nation to Bartja, made this stratagem so easy of accomplishment, that when at last messengers from Oropastes arrived in all the provinces of the empire declaring to the discontented citizens that, notwithstanding the rumor they had heard, the younger son of Cyrus was still alive, had revolted from his brother, ascended his father's throne and granted to all his subjects freedom from tribute and from military service during a period of three years, the new ruler was acknowledged throughout the kingdom with rejoicings.

The pretended Bartja, who was fully aware of his brother's mental superiority, had obeyed his directions in every particular, had taken up his residence in the palace of Nisaea,[201] in the plains of Media, placed the crown on his head, declared the royal harem his own, and had shown himself once from a distance to the people, who were to recognize in him the murdered Bartja. After that time, however, for fear of being at last unmasked, he concealed himself in his palace, giving

201. Spiegel, *Inscription of Behistân:* "There is a fortress, Cikathauvatis by name, a district, Niçâya by name, in Media, there he killed him." What town is meant here cannot be determined, but the district of Nisaja was celebrated principally for its good pasture for horses. Eustath. in *Dionys. Perieg.* p. 178. According to Diod. XVII. 10. and Arrian, *Anab.* VII. 13. there were more than 150,000 horses in this district, distinguished by their large size. According to Herodotus, the whole of this part of our story took place in Susa.

himself up, after the manner of Asiatic monarchs, to every kind of indulgence, while his brother held the sceptre with a firm hand, and conferred all the important offices of state on his friends and family.

No sooner did Oropastes feel firm ground under his feet, than he despatched the eunuch Ixabates to Egypt, to inform the army of the change of rulers that had taken place and persuade them to revolt in favor of Bartja, who he knew had been idolized by the soldiers.

The messenger had been well chosen, fulfilled his mission with much skill, and had already won over a considerable part of the army for the new king, when he was taken prisoner by some Syrians, who brought him to Memphis in hopes of reward.

On arriving in the city of the Pyramids he was brought before the king, and promised impunity on condition of revealing the entire truth.

The messenger then confirmed the rumor, which had reached Egypt, that Bartja had ascended the throne of Cyrus and had been recognized by the greater part of the empire.

Cambyses started with terror at these tidings, as one who saw a dead man rise from his grave. He was by this time fully aware that Bartja had been murdered by Prexaspes at his own command, but in this moment he began to suspect that the envoy had deceived him and spared his brother's life. The thought had no sooner entered his mind than he uttered it, reproaching Prexaspes so bitterly with treachery, as to elicit from him a tremendous oath, that he had murdered and buried the unfortunate Bartja with his own hand.

Oropastes' messenger was next asked whether he

had seen the new king himself. He answered that he had not, adding that the supposed brother of Cambyses had only once appeared in public, and had then shown himself to the people from a distance. On hearing this, Prexaspes saw through the whole web of trickery at once, reminded the king of the unhappy misunderstandings to which the marvellous likeness between Bartja and Gaumata had formerly given rise, and concluded by offering to stake his own life on the correctness of his supposition. The explanation pleased the king, and from that moment his diseased mind was possessed by one new idea to the exclusion of all others—the seizure and slaughter of the Magi.

The host was ordered to prepare for marching. Aryandes,[202] one of the Achæmenidæ, was appointed satrap of Egypt, and the army started homeward without delay. Driven by this new delusion, the king took no rest by day or night, till at last his over-ridden and ill-used horse fell with him, and he was severely wounded in the fall by his own dagger.[203]

After lying insensible for some days, he opened his eyes and asked first to see Araspes, then his mother, and lastly Atossa, although these three had set out on

202. Herod. IV. 166.

203. Herod. III. 64. In Spiegel's translation of the inscription of Behistân we read: "Thereupon Kambujiya died, having killed himself." Oppert gives the same translation of *Uvâmarsiyus*. Bensey thus: "Thereupon Kambuija died of exceeding anger." Ktesias, *Pers.* 12. says that Cambyses wounded himself with a knife in the thigh, accidentally, and died of the wound. This, as well as the account given by Herodotus, agrees with the inscription: "He ended, '*uvâmarsiyus*,' dying from himself," for even the Greeks allow that Cambyses died by his own weapon, though not by his own will. We reject the idea of wilful suicide all the more gladly, as just on this point Herodotus and Ktesias agree, and the dying speech which Herodotus puts into the mouth of Cambyses bears a decidedly Perso-Iranian character. M. Duncker, *Geschichte d. Alterth.* II. p. 544. Herodot. III. 65.

their journey home months before. From all he said it appeared that during the last four years, from the attack of fever until the present accident, he had been living in a kind of sleep. He seemed astonished and pained at hearing what had happened during these years. But of his brother's death he was fully aware. He knew that Prexaspes had killed him by his—the king's—orders and had told him that Bartja lay buried on the shores of the Red Sea.—During the night which followed this return to his senses it became clear to himself also, that his mind had been wandering for a long time. Towards morning he fell into a deep sleep, and this so restored his strength, that on waking he called for Crœsus and required an exact relation of the events that had passed during the last few years.

His old friend and adviser obeyed; he felt that Cambyses was still entrusted to his care, and in the hope, faint as it was, of bringing him back to the right way, he did not suppress one of the king's acts of violence in his relation.

His joy was therefore great at perceiving, that his words made a deep impression on the newly-awakened mind of the king. With tears in his eyes, and with the ashamed look of a child, he grieved over his wrong deeds and his madness, begged Crœsus to forgive him, thanked him for having borne so long and faithfully with him, and commissioned him to ask Kassandane and Sappho especially for forgiveness, but also, Atossa and all whom he had unjustly offended.

The old man wept too, but his tears were tears of joy and he repeatedly assured Cambyses that he would recover and have ample opportunity of making amends for the past. But to all this Cambyses shook his head

resolutely, and, pale and wan as he looked, begged Crœsus to have his couch carried on to a rising ground in the open air, and then to summon the Achæmenidæ. When these orders, in spite of the physicians, had been obeyed, Cambyses was raised into an upright sitting position, and began, in a voice which could be heard at a considerable distance:

"The time to reveal my great secret has arrived, O ye Persians. Deceived by a vision, provoked and annoyed by my brother, I caused him to be murdered in my wrath. Prexaspes wrought the evil deed by my command, but instead of bringing me the peace I yearned for, that deed has tortured me into madness and death. By this my confession ye will be convinced, that my brother Bartja is really dead. The Magi have usurped the throne of the Achæmenidæ. Oropastes, whom I left in Persia as my vicegerent and his brother Gaumata, who resembles Bartja so nearly that even Crœsus, Intaphernes and my uncle, the noble Hystaspes, were once deceived by the likeness, have placed themselves at their head. Woe is me, that I have murdered him who, as my nearest kinsman, should have avenged on the Magi this affront to my honor. But I cannot recall him from the dead, and I therefore appoint you the executors of my last will. By the Feruer* of my dead father, and in the name of all good and pure spirits, I conjure you not to suffer the government to fall into the hands of the unfaithful Magi. If they have obtained possession thereof by artifice, wrest it from their hands in like manner; if by force, use force to win it back. Obey this my last will, and the earth will yield you its fruits abundantly; your wives, your

* See vol. I. note 271.

flocks and herds shall be blessed and freedom shall be your portion. Refuse to obey it, and ye shall suffer the corresponding evils; yea, your end, and that of every Persian shall be even as mine."

After these words the king wept and sank back fainting, on seeing which, the Achæmenidæ rent their clothes and burst into loud lamentations. A few hours later Cambyses died in Crœsus' arms. Nitetis was his last thought; he died with her name on his lips and tears of penitence in his eyes.[204] When the Persians had left the unclean corpse, Crœsus knelt down beside it and cried, raising his hand to heaven: "Great Cyrus, I have kept my oath. I have remained this miserable man's faithful adviser even unto his end."

The next morning the old man betook himself, accompanied by his son Gyges, to the town of Barene, which belonged to him,[205] and lived there many years as a father to his subjects, revered by Darius and praised by all his contemporaries.

After Cambyses' death the heads of the seven Persian tribes[206] held a council, and resolved, as a first measure, on obtaining certain information as to the person of the usurper. With this view, Otanes sent a confidential eunuch to his daughter Phædime, who, as

204. Herod. III. 65. 66. mentions expressly the sentimental-sounding penitence of Cambyses.

205. Ktesias, *Pers.* 4.

206. The names of the seven conspiring chiefs, given by Herodotus agree for the most part with those in the cuneiform inscriptions. Spiegel, *Keilinschriften p.* 37. In Herod. III. 70. the names are: Otanes, Intaphernes, Gobryas, Megabyzus, Aspatines, Hydarnes and Darius Hystaspis. In the inscription *Ûtâna: Viñdafrauś, Gaubaruva, Ardumanis, Vidarna, Bagabukhsa? and Darayavus.*

they knew, had come into the possession of the new king with the rest of Cambyses' harem. Before the messenger returned, the greater part of the army had dispersed, the soldiers seizing this favorable opportunity to return to their homes and families, after so many years of absence. At last, however, the long-expected messenger came back and brought for answer, that the new king had only visited Phædime once, but that during that visit she had, at great personal risk, discovered that he had lost both ears. Without this discovery, however, she could assert positively that though there were a thousand points of similarity between the usurper and the murdered Bartja, the former was in reality none other than Gaumata, the brother of Oropastes. Her old friend Boges had resumed his office of chief of the eunuchs, and had revealed to her the secrets of the Magi. The high-priest had met the former keeper of the women begging in the streets of Susa, and had restored him to his old office with the words: "You have forfeited your life, but I want men of your stamp." In conclusion, Phædime entreated her father to use every means in his power for the overthrow of the Magi, as they treated her with the greatest contempt and she was the most miserable of women.

Though none of the Achæmenidæ had really for a moment believed, that Bartja was alive and had seized on the throne, so clear an account of the real person of the usurper was very welcome to them, and they resolved at once to march on Nisæa with the remnant of the army and overthrow the Magi either by craft or force.

They entered the new capital unassailed, and finding that the majority of the people seemed content

with the new government, they also pretended to acknowledge the king as the son of Cyrus, to whom they were prepared to do homage. The Magi, however, were not deceived; they shut themselves up in their palace, assembled an army in the Nisæan plain,* promised the soldiers high pay, and used every effort to strengthen the belief of the people in Gaumata's disguise. On this point no one could do them more injury, or, if he chose, be more useful to them, than Prexaspes. He was much looked up to by the Persians, and his assurance, that he had not murdered Bartja, would have been sufficient to lame the fast-spreading report of the real way in which the youth had met his death. Oropastes, therefore, sent for Prexaspes, who, since the king's dying words, had been avoided by all the men of his own rank and had led the life of an outlaw, and promised him an immense sum of money, if he would ascend a high tower and declare to the people, assembled in the court beneath, that evil-disposed men had called him Bartja's murderer, whereas he had seen the new king with his own eyes and had recognized in him the younger son of his benefactor. Prexaspes made no objection to this proposal, took a tender leave of his family while the people were being assembled, uttered a short prayer before the sacred fire-altar and walked proudly to the palace. On his way thither he met the chiefs of the seven tribes and seeing that they avoided him, called out to them: "I am worthy of your contempt, but I will try to deserve your forgiveness."

Seeing Darius look back, he hastened towards him, grasped his hand and said: "I have loved you like a

* See note 201.

son; take care of my children when I am no more, and use your pinions, winged Darius." Then, with the same proud demeanor he ascended the tower.

Many thousands of the citizens of Nisæa were within reach of his voice, as he cried aloud: "Ye all know that the kings who have, up to the present time, loaded you with honor and glory, belonged to the house of the Achæmenidæ. Cyrus governed you like a real father, Cambyses was a stern master, and Bartja would have guided you like a bridegroom, if I, with this right hand which I now show you, had not slain him on the shores of the Red Sea. By Mithras, it was with a bleeding heart that I committed this wicked deed, but I did it as a faithful servant in obedience to the king's command. Nevertheless, it has haunted me by day and night; for four long years I have been pursued and tormented by the spirits of darkness, who scare sleep from the murderer's couch. I have now resolved to end this painful, despairing existence by a worthy deed, and though even this may procure me no mercy at the bridge of Chinvat,* in the mouths of men, at least, I shall have redeemed my honorable name from the stain with which I defiled it. Know then, that the man who gives himself out for the son of Cyrus, sent me hither; he promised me rich rewards if I would deceive you by declaring him to be Bartja, the son of the Achæmenidæ. But I scorn his promises and swear by Mithras and the Feruers of the kings, the most solemn oaths I am acquainted with, that the man who is now ruling you is none other than the Magian Gaumata, he who was deprived of his ears, the brother of the king's vicegerent and high-priest, Oropastes, whom ye all know. If it be your will to

* See note 15.

forget all the glory ye owe to the Achæmenidæ, if to this ingratitude ye choose to add your own degradation, then acknowledge these creatures and call them your kings; but if ye despise a lie and are ashamed to obey worthless impostors, drive the Magi from the throne before Mithras has left the heavens, and proclaim the noblest of the Achæmenidæ, Darius, the exalted son of Hystaspes, who promises to become a second Cyrus, as your king. And now, in order that ye may believe my words and not suspect that Darius sent me hither to win you over to his side, I will commit a deed, which must destroy every doubt and prove that the truth and glory of the Achæmenidæ are dearer to me, than life itself. Blessed be ye if ye follow my counsels, but curses rest upon you, if ye neglect to reconquer the throne from the Magi and revenge yourselves upon them.—Behold, I die a true and honorable man!"

With these words he ascended the highest pinnacle of the tower and cast himself down head foremost, thus expiating the one crime of his life by an honorable death.[207]

The dead silence with which the people in the court below had listened to him, was now broken by shrieks of rage and cries for vengeance. They burst open the gates of the palace and were pressing in with cries of "Death to the Magi," when the seven princes of the Persians appeared in front of the raging crowd to resist their entrance.

At sight of the Achæmenidæ the citizens broke into shouts of joy, and cried more impetuously than ever, "Down with the Magi! Victory to King Darius!"

The son of Hystaspes was then carried by the crowd

207. Herod. III. 75.

to a rising ground, from which he told the people that the Magi had been slain by the Achæmenidæ, as liars and usurpers. Fresh cries of joy arose in answer to these words, and when at last the bleeding heads of Oropastes and Gaumata were shown to the crowd, they rushed with horrid yells through the streets of the city, murdering every Magian they could lay hold of. The darkness of night alone was able to stop this awful massacre.[208]

Four days later, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, was chosen as king by the heads of the Achæmenidæ, in consideration of his high birth and noble character, and received by the Persian nation with enthusiasm. Darius had killed Gaumata with his own hand, and the high-priest had received his death-thrust from the hand of Megabyzus, the father of Zopyrus. While Prexaspes was haranguing the people, the seven conspiring Persian princes, Otanes, Intaphernes, Gobryas, Megabyzus, Aspatines, Hydarnes and Darius, (as representative of his aged father Hystaspes), had entered the palace by a carelessly-guarded gate, sought out the part of the building occupied by the Magi, and then, assisted by their own knowledge of the palace, and the fact that most of the guards had been sent to keep watch over the crowd assembled to hear Prexaspes easily penetrated to the apartments in which at that moment they were

208. Herod. III. 79. In this place Herodotus also says that the Persians kept this day as a great festival, and called it "the murder of the Magi." Wlastoff, in his *Nouvelles annales des voyages*. Vol. 177. gives us some new thoughts on this period of Persian history, with which, however, we are as little inclined to agree as with Malcolm, Anquetil and others, in their conjecture that the Darius of the inscriptions is the Gustasps of Firdusi. It is unquestionably far more probable that the inscription of Behistân was intended to hand down the deeds of Darius to posterity, than to commemorate religious occurrences.

to be found. Here they were resisted by a few eunuchs, headed by Boges, but these were overpowered and killed to a man. Darius became furious on seeing Boges, and killed him at once. Hearing the dying cries of these eunuchs, the Magi rushed to the spot and prepared to defend themselves. Oropastes snatched a lance from the fallen Boges, thrust out one of Intaphernes' eyes and wounded Aspatines in the thigh, but was stabbed by Megabyzus. Gaumata fled into another apartment and tried to bar the door, but was followed too soon by Darius and Gobryas; the latter seized, threw him, and kept him down by the weight of his own body, crying to Darius, who was afraid of making a false stroke in the half-light, and so wounding his companion instead of Gaumata, "Strike boldly, even if you should stab us both." Darius obeyed, and fortunately only hit the Magian.[209]

Thus died Oropastes, the high-priest, and his brother Gaumata, better known under the name of the "pseudo" or "pretended Smerdis."

A few weeks after Darius' election to the throne, which the people said had been marvellously influenced by divine miracles and the clever cunning of a groom,[210] he celebrated his coronation brilliantly at Pasargadæ, and with still more splendor, his marriage

209. Herod. III. 78.

210. Herod. (III. 85.) relates, that the seven conspirators agreed to take a ride out of the city, and that he whose horse was the first to neigh at the rising sun should be king. He then tells the well-known tale of the trick said to have been played by Darius' groom, and adds that at the same time, though the sky was clear, it had thundered and lightened. The former part of this history is probable, as horses were sacred to the sun, and the neighing of Darius' horse as Mithras rose, would therefore be regarded as a sign from heaven. But the claims of Darius to the throne were too well-founded, to need the support of a groom's cunning.

with his beloved Atossa.[211] The trials of her life had ripened her character, and she proved a faithful, beloved and respected companion to her husband through the whole of that active and glorious life, which, as Prexaspes had foretold, made him worthy of the names by which he was afterwards known—Darius the Great, and a second Cyrus.[212]

As a general he was circumspect and brave, and at the same time understood so thoroughly how to divide his enormous realm, and to administer its affairs, that he must be classed with the greatest organizers of all times and countries. That his feeble successors were able to keep this Asiatic Colossus of different countries together for two hundred years after his death, was entirely owing to Darius. He was liberal of his own, but sparing of his subjects' treasures, and made truly royal gifts without demanding more than was his due. He introduced a regular system of taxation, in place of the arbitrary exactions practised under Cyrus and Cambyses, and never allowed himself to be led astray in the carrying out of what seemed to him right, either by difficulties or by the ridicule of the Achæmenidæ, who nicknamed him the "shopkeeper," on account of what seemed, to their exclusively military tastes, his petty financial measures. It is by no means one of his smallest merits, that he introduced

211. Atossa is constantly mentioned as the favorite wife of Darius, and he appointed her son Xerxes to be his successor, though he had three elder sons by the daughter of Gobryas. Herodotus (VII. 3.) speaks with emphasis of the respect and consideration in which Atossa was held, and Aeschylus, in his *Persians*, mentions her in her old age, as the much-revered and noble matron.

212. For instance in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes (V. 1035.) Darius is called "the great."

one system of coinage through his entire empire, and consequently through half the then known world.[213]

Darius respected the religions and customs of other nations. When the writing of Cyrus, of the existence of which Cambyses had known nothing, was found in the archives of Ecbatana, he allowed the Jews to carry on the building of their temple to Jehovah;[214] he also left the Ionian cities free to govern their own communities independently. Indeed, he would hardly have sent his army against Greece, if the Athenians had not insulted him.

In Egypt he had learnt much; among other things, the art of managing the exchequer of his kingdom wisely; for this reason he held the Egyptians in high esteem, and granted them many privileges, amongst others a canal to connect the Nile with the Red Sea, which was greatly to the advantage of their commerce.[215]

213. Herod. III. 89. Böckh, *Metrologie* p. 45 and 129. In Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Vol. II. p. 460. Essay III.

214. Ezra VI. 2–12. Zechariah 1–8. On the various stages of the work, see Bunsen, *Bibelwerk. Biblische Jahrbücher* CCCXXIII-XXV.

215. Traces of this canal can be found as early as the days of Setos I.; his son Rameses II. caused the works to be continued. Under Necho they were recommenced, and possibly finished by Darius. In the time of the Ptolemies, at all events, the canal was already completed. Herod. II. 158. Diod. I. 33. The French, in undertaking to reconstruct the Suez canal, have had much to encounter from the unfriendly commercial policy of the English and their influence over the internal affairs of Egypt, but the unwearied energy and great talent of Monsr. de Lesseps and the patriotism of the French nation have at last succeeded in bringing their great work to a successful close. Whether it will pay is another question. See G. Ebers, *Der Kanal von Suez. Nordische Revue*, October 1864. The maritime canal connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea has also been completed since 1869. We were among those, who attended the brilliant inauguration ceremonies, and now willingly recall many of the doubts expressed in our work *Durch Gosen zum Sinai*. The number of ships passing through the canal is constantly increasing. Direct lines to Bombay leave London, Liverpool, Marseilles, Genoa, Trieste, Brin-

During the whole of his reign, Darius endeavored to make amends for the severity with which Cambyses had treated the Egyptians; even in the later years of his life he delighted to study the treasures of their wisdom, and no one was allowed to attack either their religion or customs, as long as he lived. The old high-priest Neithotep enjoyed the king's favor to the last, and Darius often made use of his wise old master's astrological knowledge.

The goodness and clemency of their new ruler was fully acknowledged by the Egyptians; they called him a deity,[216] as they had called their own kings, and yet, in the last years of his reign, their desire for independence led them to forget gratitude and to try to shake off his gentle yoke, which was only oppressive because it had originally been forced on them.

Their generous ruler and protector did not live to see the end of this struggle.[217]

disi and Odessa. Many ships of lighter draught are built specially for this voyage, and it appears that cotton can be transported from India to Mediterranean and English ports more cheaply in steamers through the canal, than in sailing vessels around the Cape. We refer the reader also to Stephan's essay on the Suez Canal in his admirable work *Das heutige Aegypten* p. 425 and following.

216. The name of Darius occurs very often on the monuments as Ntariusch. It is most frequently found in the inscriptions on the temple in the Oasis el-Khargah, recently photographed by G. Rohlfs. The Egypto-Persian memorial fragments, bearing inscriptions in the hieroglyphic and cuneiform characters are very interesting. *Description de l'Eg. ant.* V. Pl. 29. Lepsius, *Monatsbericht der Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaft.* May 17, 1866. p. 285, &c. Darius's name in Egyptian was generally "Ra, the beloved of Ammon." On a porcelain vessel in Florence, and in some papyri in Paris and Florence he is called by the divine titles of honor given to the Pharaohs.

217. The first rebellion in Egypt, which broke out under Aryandes, the satrap appointed by Cambyses, was put down by Darius in person. He visited Egypt, and promised 100 talents (£22,500) to any one who would find a new Apis. Polyaen. VII. 11. 7. No second outbreak took place until 486 B. C. about 4 years before the death of Darius. Herod. VII. 1. Xerxes conquered the rebels two years after his accession, and appointed his brother Achæmenes satrap of Egypt.

It was reserved for Xerxes, the successor and son of Darius and Atossa,* to bring back the inhabitants of the Nile valley to a forced and therefore insecure obedience.

Darius left a worthy monument of his greatness in the glorious palace which he built on Mount Rachmed, the ruins of which are the wonder and admiration of travellers to this day. Six thousand Egyptian workmen, who had been sent to Asia by Cambyses, took part in the work and also assisted in building a tomb for Darius and his successors, the rocky and almost inaccessible chambers of which have defied the ravages of time, and are now the resort of innumerable wild pigeons.

He caused the history of his deeds to be cut, (in the cuneiform character and in the Persian, Median and Assyrian languages), on the polished side of the rock of Bisitun or Behistân, not far from the spot where he saved Atossa's life. The Persian part of this inscription** can still be deciphered with certainty, and contains an account of the events related in the last few chapters, very nearly agreeing with our own and that of Herodotus. The following sentences occur amongst others: "Thus saith Darius the King: That which I have done, was done by the grace of Auramazda in every way. I fought nineteen battles after the rebellion of the kings. By the mercy of Auramazda I conquered them. I took nine kings captive. One was a Median, Gaumata by name. He lied and said: 'I am Bardiya (Bartja), the son of Cyrus.' He caused Persia to rebel."

* See note 211.

** The cuneiform character called Persian-Achæmedian.

Some distance lower down, he names the chiefs who helped him to dethrone the Magi, and in another place the inscription has these words: "Thus saith the King Darius: That which I have done was done in every way by the grace of Auramazda. Auramazda helped me, and such other gods as there be. Auramazda and the other gods gave me help, because I was not swift to anger, nor a liar, nor a violent ruler, neither I nor my kinsmen. I have shown favor unto him who helped my brethren, and I have punished severely him who was my enemy. Thou who shalt be king after me, be not merciful unto him who is a liar or a rebel, but punish him with a severe punishment. Thus saith Darius the King: Thou who shalt hereafter behold this tablet which I have written, or these pictures, destroy them not, but so long as thou shalt live preserve them, &c."

It now only remains to be told that Zopyrus, the son of Megabyzus, continued to the last the king's most faithful friend.

A courtier once showed the king a pomegranate, and asked him of what one gift of fortune he would like so many repetitions, as there were seeds in that fruit. Without a moment's hesitation Darius answered, "Of my Zopyrus."[218]

The following story will prove that Zopyrus, on his part, well understood how to return his royal friend's kindness. After the death of Cambyses, Babylon revolted from the Persian empire. Darius besieged the city nine months in vain, and was about to raise the

218. Plutarch tells this story (in his *Apophthegmata* p. 173.) of Zopyrus, and Herodotus of Megabyzus, the conqueror of Thrace. Herod, IV. 193.

siege, when one day Zopyrus appeared before him bleeding, and deprived of his ears and nose, and explained that he had mutilated himself thus in order to cheat the Babylonians, who knew him well, as he had formerly been on intimate terms with their daughters. He said he wished to tell the haughty citizens, that Darius had thus disfigured him, and that he had come to them for help in revenging himself. He thought they would then place troops at his disposal, with which he intended to impose upon them by making a few successful sallies at first. His ultimate intention was to get possession of the keys, and open the Semiramis gate to his friends.

These words, which were spoken in a joking tone, contrasted so sadly with the mutilated features of his once handsome friend, that Darius wept, and when at last the almost impregnable fortress was really won by Zopyrus' stratagem, he excaimed: "I would give a hundred Babylons, if my Zopyrus had not thus mutilated himself."

He then appointed his friend lord of the giant city, gave him its entire revenues, and honored him every year with the rarest presents. In later days he used to say that, with the exception of Cyrus, who had no equal, no man had ever performed so generous a deed as Zopyrus.[219]

Few rulers possessed so many self-sacrificing friends as Darius, because few understood so well how to be grateful.

When Syloson, the brother of the murdered Poly-

219. Herod. III. 160. Among other presents Zopyrus received a gold hand-mill weighing six talents, the most honorable and distinguished gift a Persian monarch could bestow upon a subject. According to Ktesias, Megabyzus received this gift from Xerxes.

krates, came to Susa and reminded the king of his former services, Darius received him as a friend, placed ships and troops at his service, and helped him to recover Samos.

The Samians made a desperate resistance, and said, when at last they were obliged to yield: "Through Syloson we have much room in our land."*

Rhodopis lived to hear of the murder of Hipparchus, the tyrant of Athens, by Harmodius and Aristogiton, and died at last in the arms of her best friends, Theopompus the Milesian and Kallias the Athenian, firm in her belief of the high calling of her countrymen.

All Naukratis mourned for her, and Kallias sent a messenger to Susa, to inform the king and Sappho of her death.

A few months later the satrap of Egypt received the following letter from the hand of the king:

"Inasmuch as we ourselves knew and honored Rhodopis, the Greek, who has lately died in Naukratis, —inasmuch as her granddaughter, as widow of the lawful heir to the Persian throne, enjoys to this day the rank and honors of a queen,—and lastly, inasmuch as I have lately taken the great-grandchild of the same Rhodopis, Parmys,** the daughter of Bartja and Sappho, to be my third lawful wife, it seems to me just to grant royal honors to the ancestress of two queens. I therefore command thee to cause the ashes of Rhodopis, whom we have always esteemed as the greatest and rarest among women, to be buried in the greatest and rarest of all monuments, namely, in one of the

* See note 96. ** See note 197.

Pyramids. The costly urn, which thou wilt receive herewith, is sent by Sappho to preserve the ashes of the deceased."

Given in the new imperial palace at Persepolis.

DARIUS, son of Hystaspes.

King.

THE END.

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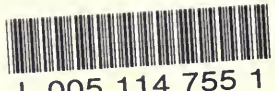
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